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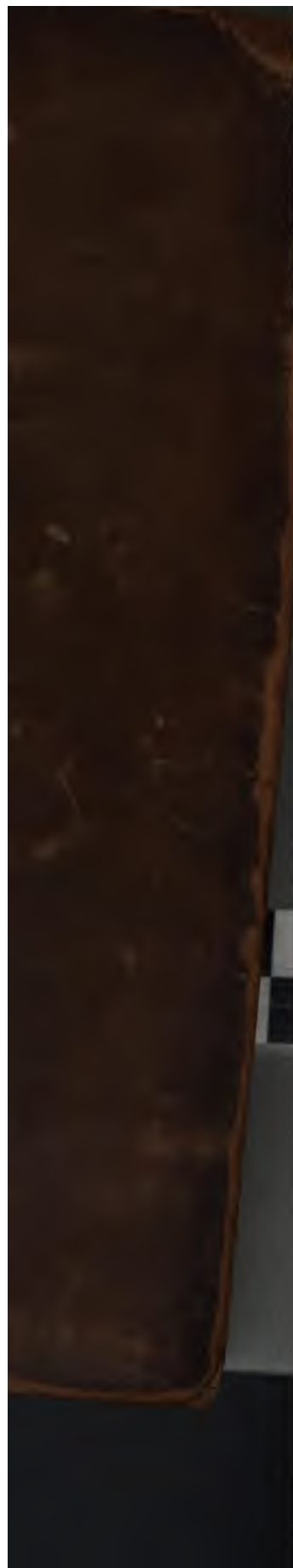
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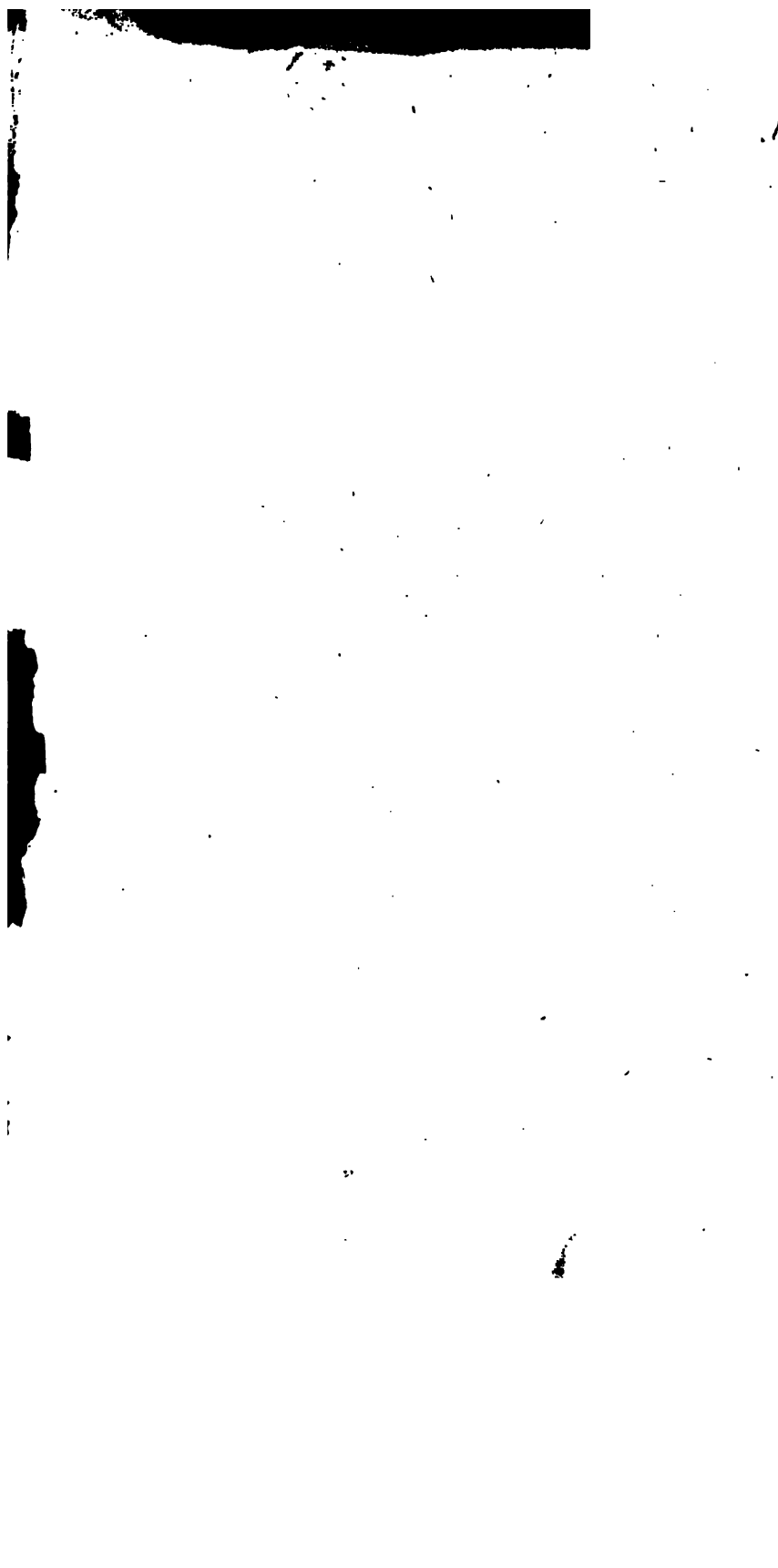
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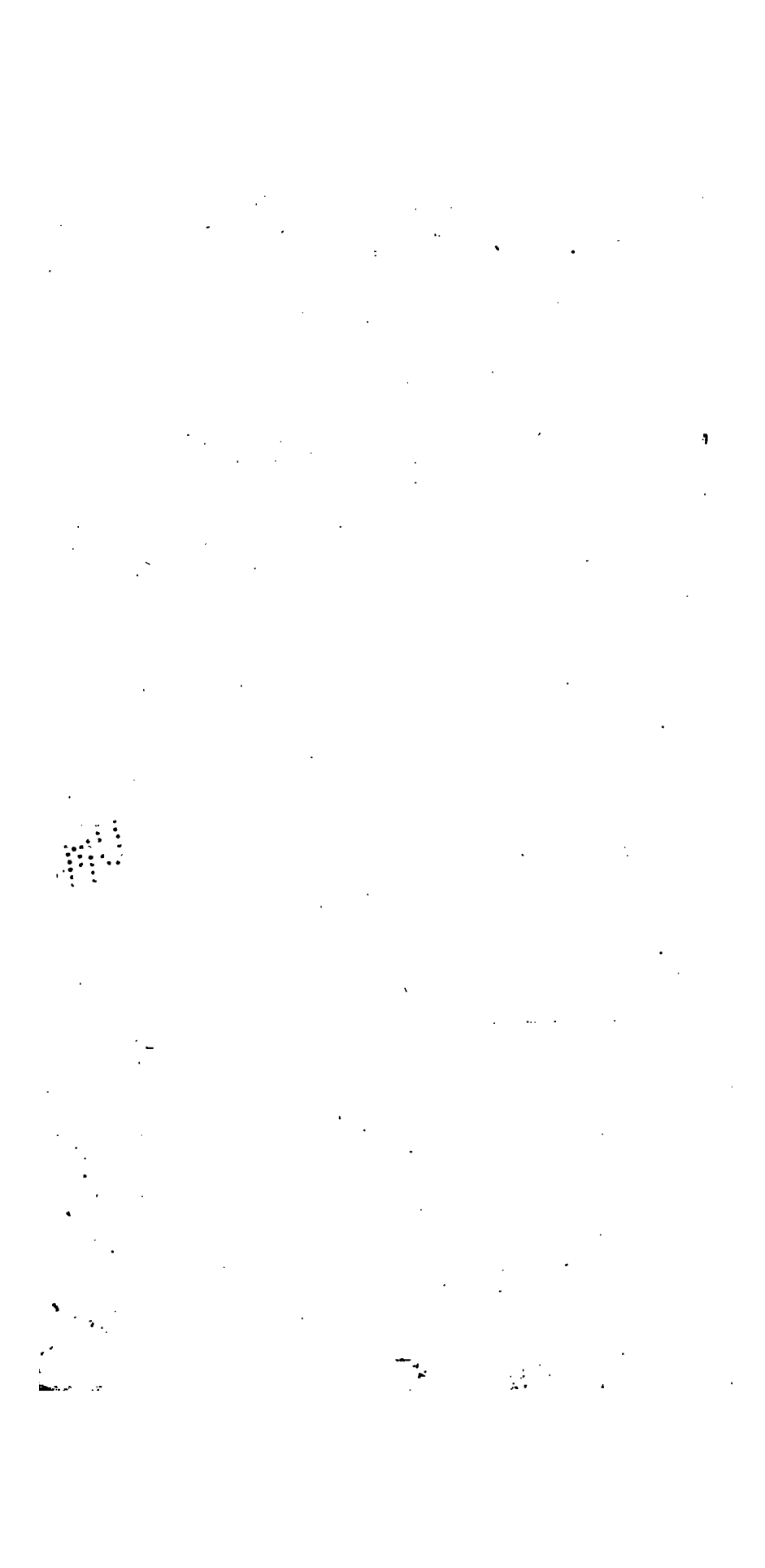
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AN
A B R I D G E M E N T
O F
Ecclesiastical History,
FROM THE
COMMENCEMENT OF CHRISTIANITY,
TO THE
BEGINNING OF THE PRESENT CENTURY;
CONSTRUCTED UPON A NEW PLAN,
AND
DIVIDED INTO FOUR GRAND PERIODS.

By PATRICK NISBET, D. D.
Minister of HUTTON.

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P R E F A C E.

THE Christian Church may be considered as a vast community, a great and noble republic, founded on Divine institution, and governed by peculiar laws both of a religious and political nature. Its internal constitution, its system of doctrine, discipline, worship and polity, and its external situation and circumstances in the world, whether prosperous or adverse, depressed or triumphant, do justly merit attention. Here must open a wide field for curious research and observation.

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THE support and government of so immense a society, the movements of such a complicated machine, and,—whilst it points to sublimer objects, and would steer a course to celestial habitations, its intimate connection, in mean time, with this world, with princes and potentates, with states and kingdoms, with transactions of peace and war, with any new event or revolution, and with men of every rank and character,—all this serves remarkably to enrich and diversify the scene of Ecclesiastical History.

THIS, however, it must be owned, is too little known by many ; and whilst they roam at large through other less valuable volumes of history, they preposterously neglect this more curious and interesting one, calculated to improve a solid, sagacious taste ; and even to gratify, in some degree, an imagination turned
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for romance, considering the numerous and marvellous incidents with which it is crowded.

To remove a considerable objection made by some, I have, in the following performance, lopped off numberless excrescencies which over-load our Church-histories in general ; whilst, however, I have judged it proper, to introduce a variety of episodes and observations omitted by others. Yet, I find, that some, on the other hand, have affected such a short, systematic method, as to render their account of things little better than a mere chronological index, jejune and uninteresting, whilst they have neglected to lay open the true springs of action, to trace the movement and gradual evolution of affairs, or to resolve into their proper causes the various events and revolutions which they too transiently relate.

I have aimed at something of a medium between both those extremes : Whether I have succeeded or not, others must determine.

WITH a farther view to introduce to more general attention the History of the Church, I have followed out a kind of continued narration, through the FOUR GRAND PERIODS into which I have divided the Work : This, I knew, would be more agreeable to the present polished taste, than if I had formally thrown it into separate centuries and subdivisions, as most other historians do, though they acknowledge this method is attended with several disadvantages. Thus also, I have avoided in particular, many disagreeable repetitions, whilst, at same time, I have been duly attentive to chronological order, and to the natural series of events, and
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that too, even when I venture on a new and peculiar arrangement.

SOME such compendious view of Ecclesiastical History, from the commencement of Christianity to the beginning of the present century, as this now offered to the public, has been thought by some a performance, if properly executed, in some measure wanting in the historical department. This kind of summary, containing the elements of Church History, may be of particular use to such who have not leisure to peruse larger volumes, and will not, it is hoped, be altogether unprofitable nor unpleasant even to those, who have made this branch of study an object of some attention. Even from the brevity of it a deeper impression may be rivetted in the mind,—just as we retain a more distinct remembrance of a landscape that is not too extensive and variegated ;

gated ; or, as a principal piece in painting strikes the eye more exquisitely, the less it is encumbered with a group of figures.

WHERE the subjects were rich and copious, it was not easy always to hold an equal hand ; and some may perhaps imagine, that I have been too diffusive on some occasions, and affected too much brevity upon others. All I shall say is, that I apprehend every man is at liberty to chuse his own subject, and to treat it after his own manner, agreeable to the particular plan which he himself proposes. The public possess the undoubted privilege of approving or condemning as they shall see proper, and to their verdict every author is obliged to submit.

To comprise so much as I have done within such narrow limits, was accompanied

nied with considerable difficulty. I have sometimes found myself doubtful of proceeding, and almost ready to be embarrassed amidst a multiplicity of scenes and events, where the ground would have been smooth and easy upon a more extensive scale, which did not, however, quadrate with my plan. On the same foot, I have been frequently obliged to decline remarks, and even to force myself away from reflections that occurred, during my progress in this work.

HOWEVER, I have in general marked the introduction and propagation of Christianity in the world, the persecutions it underwent, the heresies which sprung up in the Church, the illustrious men, particularly the primitive Fathers who flourished in it, the most celebrated councils which were convened, and the various usages, rites, and ceremonies gradually adopted.

I have considered the rise, the advancement, and system of *Popery*, that amazing, mysterious structure ; displayed the origin and traced the progress of the *Reformation* in the different kingdoms and countries of Europe, in one connected view ; assigned the causes that contributed to stop its growth and enlargement ; stated a sort of estimate between Popish and Protestant States ; and occasionally introduced many passages of civil history, which served to illustrate or embellish the history of the Church. At same time, I have paid some attention to the discovery or cultivation of the arts and sciences, to the decline or improvements of learning and philosophy, especially as these have had any influence on religion, or upon the state and character of its votaries.

SHOULD this performance be so fortunate as to meet with a favourable reception

tion, such a flattering circumstance may encourage me to publish several other Tracts and Dissertations on various subjects, some of which are already prepared for the press.

IN mean time, I hope the indulgent Reader will make candid allowances, for any mistakes or defects he may discover, in what is now with all humility presented to his hand.



A N
A B R I D G E M E N T
O F
ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY,
FROM THE
COMMENCEMENT OF CHRISTIANITY,
TO THE
BEGINNING OF THE PRESENT CENTURY.
IN F O U R P A R T S.

P A R T I.

THE study of history in general is agreeable, improving, and useful: By it we enter into human life, take a survey of human affairs, gratify the boundless curiosity of the soul of man, and enlarge the sphere of our knowledge. In it we learn, in a special manner, the science of mankind, and behold them in all their variety of characters and situations.

This makes to pass in regular review before us, the origin, the progress, the establishment of states and kingdoms, the flourishing, the decline, the subversion of nations and empires, the various revolutions that have happened in the world, with their springs, and movements, and effects.

Ecclesiastical history may not only exhibit these occasionally in the course of narration, but is at-

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tended with additional circumstances peculiarly interesting. The most splendid scenes of civil history are far superior to vulgar life, and are chiefly displayed for the benefit of those who move in higher orbits, and who support public and distinguished characters.

The history of the Christian Church, in its several stages and periods, becomes an object to every Christian, of whatever rank or denomination. His sacred profession is here more immediately concerned, his passions are thereupon more deeply interested, and he may derive personal advantage from a review of his religion, not in theory, but in real life.

Ecclesiastical history opens a wide and extensive field, in which a vast variety of objects and events must occur. These, if minutely traced and carefully delineated, may afford abundance of matter sufficient for many volumes.

My design is only to take a cursory glance of this large region, without traversing every particular part, and to exhibit to view material scenes, the most instructive and entertaining. This I shall attempt, aiming at great brevity, but not over-sollicitous about all the minuter delicacies of arrangement and embellishment, which might perhaps be expected in a more full and formal history.

The duration of the world from the creation of it, to the appearance of JESUS CHRIST may be divided into six ages.

The first, is from the creation to the flood, and consists of 1656 years, 1 month, 26 days.

The second, from the end of the deluge till the calling of Abraham, contains 426 years, 4 months, 18 days. Then at the divine call did the Patriarch depart from Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan.

The

The third period reaches from the calling of Abraham to the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, a space of 430 years.

The fourth, from the departure of the Jews out of Egypt till the building of Solomon's temple, is 479 years, 17 days.

The fifth, from the building of the temple to the end of the captivity of the Jews, extends to 476 years.

The sixth, from setting of the Jews at liberty by Cyrus king of Persia, till the birth of Jesus CHRIST, amounts to the number of 532 years.

All these together make up 3999 years, and 7 months; though some computations of chronology fix it at 3987 years, and others, the exact number of 4000 years.

In this fulness of time, and when the proper period determined by the decrees of heaven arrived, JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God became incarnate. As the Son of man he sprang of the family of Abraham, and of the blood-royal of David, according to promise, and was at this time born at Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of the emperor Augustus Cæsar.

It is a general opinion, that the temple of Janus was then shut, and that a profound peace universally prevailed in the world. This pacific state of things favoured the propagation of the gospel, and thereby the first preachers of it were enabled to execute their divine commission with more safety and success. It likewise reflected a lustre upon christianity itself, and gave weight to its credibility, as it was not ushered into the world amidst scenes of war and bloodshed, of public disorder and general commotion, but when mankind enjoyed the sweets of ease and tranquillity, and were more at leisure to examine with exactness, and to weigh
with

with deliberation the truth or falshood of religious pretensions. This was also a proper season for the appearance of the great, the merciful Messiah, suitable to his character as the Prince of Peace, and emblematical of his peaceful religion and empire, the grand objects of which were reconciliation and love, harmony and happiness.

Some imagine that the actual birth of Christ does a few years precede our vulgar æra. But though this event may not be marked with minute precision, occasioned by the different calculations of chronologists, yet it is universally agreed, that it happened about the year of the world 4000; a thousand years after the dedication of Solomon's temple, and about the 754th year of Rome.

Then it was that the celebrated Roman republic returned to a kind of monarchical state under the emperor Augustus. In his time all the polite arts flourished, and though he was a consummate Statesman and an illustrious General, yet he was the distinguished patron of learning, and allowed men of merit and taste, free access to his presence.

The vast extent of the Roman empire, and the subjection of so many nations and kingdoms to the supreme dominion of a polished people, was of considerable service in civilizing the world, and preparing the minds of men for a candid and honourable reception of christianity. It opened up a social correspondence among people of different languages and customs; more easy methods of communication to distant provinces were formed; the laws and manners of the Romans introduced into foreign countries, gradually improved the rude and barbarous inhabitants, and the benign light and influence of philosophy, diffused a softening and refinement, to which they had been formerly strangers. This, in concurrence with other causes, did

did no doubt facilitate the progress of the gospel, after it made its appearance in the world.

But it must be acknowledged by all acquainted with history, that notwithstanding the perfection to which the polite arts and sciences were carried, yet religion lay under a dark cloud, and superstition reigned triumphant both among Jews and Gentiles. The whole heathen world was addicted to polytheism and idolatry, held a vast multiplicity of gods and goddesses, and worshipped them in the grossest manner. They adored the hosts of heaven, and bowed down to stocks and stones, they believed the most absurd and fabulous tales, and approached their false deities with rites and ceremonies foolish, impure and inhuman. They were ignorant of the true God, who made heaven and earth, and all things therein, a Being of infinite, adorable perfections, and utter strangers to rational and spiritual worship. In consequence of this, they ran into all manner of wickedness, and a general corruption and profligacy prevailed every where. Thus stood the theology and morality of paganism.

Even among the Jews, religion was at this period of time very much eclipsed and disfigured. They in some measure made void the law of Moses by a number of mistaken notions, and superstitious observances. These they partly imbibed during the Babylonish captivity, and partly derived from the nations around them, with whom they lived in constant intercourse, particularly, the Egyptians, Syrians, and Arabians †. These ill-grounded and foolish opinions, and their supernumerary rites and ceremonies, which they intermingled with those of the law, were also suitable to their own vain and corrupt hearts, and favoured the indulgencies of
licentious

† Vid. Spencer, *De legibus Hebræorum*, vol. II. p. 1080, and Josephus, book III. ch. 7.

licentious practice. Accordingly they embraced many dangerous principles, abandoned themselves to every species of vice, and were split into sects and parties. The most famous of these were the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. These three celebrated sects acknowledged the divine legation of Moses, and the authority of the Prophets, but notwithstanding this, they struck out new opinions of their own, and abounded in religious innovations, though strictly prohibited from this by their great legislator. Thus does the church of Rome own the authority both of the Old and New Testament, whilst yet they maintain doctrines and usages contrary to both, and repugnant to reason itself. The Pharisees superadd to the written law, that which they deliver by oral tradition. This they pretend was originally given to Moses, though not recorded by him, and this they are pleased to put upon an equal footing with the former. Thus a wide door is flung open for the inventions and fancies of men, which may be multiplied and modified without end or measure. This the Pharisees did in numberless respects; they disregarded the genuine meaning of scripture, put their own false glosses and interpretations upon it, and placed the stress of religion in external shew and ceremony, whilst they were full of deceit, hypocrisy, and wickedness.

The Sadducees were a sect which commenced about 200 years before Christ. It is said to have been founded by one Sadoc, who taught there was neither angel nor spirit, heaven nor hell; to these dangerous tenets his disciples adhered, denying the resurrection of the body, and the immortality of the soul, whilst they gave themselves up to work iniquity with greediness.

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The Essenes rejected the letter of the law and the natural meaning of it, and chiefly considered it as a kind of allegorical system of sublime and mysterious truths. They indulged flights of enthusiasm, placed the whole of religion in silence and contemplation; loved solitude and abstraction from the world, affected much rigour and austerity of manners, and despised the duties of social life. This fanatical tribe spread abroad through Syria, Egypt, and the adjacent countries, and their peculiar notions which aimed at something superior to humanity, infected multitudes, who were of an indolent turn or gloomy complexion. From them I am apt to think, has the Romish church copied the monastic life, and hereupon founded such an amazing number of convents, nunneries, and monasteries, to the general detriment of society, but to its own great emolument.

Thus we find the whole world, both Jews and Gentiles, were sunk into deplorable ignorance, error and wickedness, when it pleased God to send Jesus Christ into the world, as † “a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel.” It must be acknowledged, that providence raised up, from time to time, in different kingdoms and countries, men of exalted genius, who entertained juster sentiments and more extensive views. Such rose superior in their apprehensions of religion and virtue to the inferior vulgar, were dissatisfied with the superstition of the times in which they lived, and made some feeble efforts to instruct and reclaim mankind. But they were unequal to the arduous task, and they themselves were partly tainted with the false notions and prejudices which universally prevailed, were sometimes overborne by their unhappy influence, and often perplexed with doubts

† Luke ii. 32.

doubts and uncertainties. This will apply even to the renowned Socrates and the illustrious Cicero, the two bright eyes of Greece and Rome.

It required an extraordinary interposition of heaven, something above human power, wisdom, and authority, to rectify the errors and disorders of the world, to dispel the darkness which hung over it, and to bring about an entire and effectual reformation. This was reserved for the Son of God himself, the great, the magnificent Messiah. "To him gave all the Prophets witness!" And Saint John the Baptist, a burning and shining light, was appointed his fore-runner, to prepare the way before him, and as his herald and harbinger solemnly to announce his glorious appearance. John himself wrought no miracles, but with a voice which made the whole land of Judea resound, he called on all to repent, and to receive in a proper manner the approaching Saviour. And such was the dignity of the Baptist's office, such the importance of his doctrine, such the innocence and noble austerity of his manners, that all acknowledged him a Prophet; vast multitudes flocked to see and hear him in the wilderness, and were baptized by him confessing their sins. At same time he had access to kings and courts, "Herod feared John, heard him gladly, and did many things †." Yea some were ready to look on him as the Messiah himself, with such veneration did they regard him, especially as no Prophet had appeared among the people of the Jews for about 500 years before. But he soon undeceived them, expressly declared that he was not the Christ; and spoke of himself in the most diminutive terms when compared with him, "the latchet of whose shoes he was not worthy to loose ‡." But now, towards the conclusion of the

† Mark vi. 20. ‡ Mark i. 7. Luke iii. 16.

the reign of Herod the Great, Jesus himself made his solemn entrance into our world ; and John particularly pointed him out, and said *, “ Behold the “ Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the “ world.” He was born of the Virgin Mary after a miraculous manner, by the over-shadowing power of the Holy Ghost. At the time of his birth, a new star appeared in the east to conduct certain Magi, the Princes and philosophers of that country to the place of his nativity, who went and worshipped him, and offered gifts of gold and frankincense to him. And indeed in distant countries, as well as in Judea, a general opinion prevailed, that there was soon to appear in the world a very great and illustrious Personage. This the Messiah really was, tho’ to comport with the mysterious plans of Providence, he veiled for a season the resplendent glories of his original nature and character. Accordingly, he who was the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person, assumed human nature, and was born in a low condition. Soon after his birth, he was obliged to fly into Egypt, to avoid the rage of Herod’s cruelty, who had conceived a jealousy of him. When he was about twelve years of age, he disputed with the learned Rabbies in the temple, and conversed with the Jewish Doctors concerning the sublime truths of religion, so that all were astonished at his knowledge and judgment. He increased in stature and wisdom, and in favour with God and man, paid filial obedience to his Virgin Mother, and to Joseph his reputed Father, because betrothed to her, and with wonderful condescension stooped to the obscurity of private life, till about the thirtieth year of his age. Then, at that time of life fixed for the Priests under the law, to enter on the sacer-

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* John i. 29. 36.

dotal function, he assumed a public character, and declared himself to be the promised Messiah, the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world. These were very high pretensions, and to support them, and to convince the world of the reality and certainty of them, he appealed to the singular excellence and sublimity of his doctrine, to many famous prophecies pronounced of him, through a series of almost four thousand years, and to the most astonishing miracles performed by himself. He spake as never man spake; he taught as one having authority; and all were amazed at the gracious words which proceeded from his mouth, and at the mighty wonders wrought by his hands. It does not come within our plan here to enter into a detail of the life and actions, and doctrines of Jesus Christ. No Christian can be ignorant of these; and a particular prosecution of them would constitute rather a theological than an historical discourse.

But I would observe, that the Son of God having fulfilled all righteousness, having finished the work which the Father had given him to do, and concluded the scene of his public ministry, which continued near four years, was causelessly and cruelly put to death by the Jews. But for this end he came into the world, to taste death for every man. He suffered the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God, and offered up himself a sacrifice and propitiation, to atone for the sins of a guilty world. The chief priests, and scribes and rulers of the nation were moved with envy against him, were offended at the refinement of his doctrine, whilst the exalted sanctity of his manners which shone with unrivalled lustre, upbraided their whole behaviour; and the people were disappointed

ed as to their secular prospects, because he refused to be King, and to erect a temporal kingdom. Thereupon their admiration was turned into rage and malice, they treated him with every imaginable indignity, and crucified him between two thieves upon Mount Calvary, without the gates of Jerusalem. He bore all with unexampled patience and magnanimity, passed through the most mournful scenes of ignominy and agony, with a grace and dignity becoming the Son of God, and at last went off in a triumph of goodness and charity, praying for his enemies, and saying,—“ Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*.”

At that memorable juncture, the heavens were over-cast with sable darkness, the earth trembled as if moving out of its place, and all nature struck with the unusual and amazing spectacle, seemed to sympathize with its suffering Lord.

This interesting and astonishing event happened when Tiberius was Roman Emperor, Pontius Pilate Governor of Judea, and Caiphas the High Priest.—The body of Jesus was taken down from the cross by Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, “ Who wrapped it in fine linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn out of a rock, wherein never man before was laid.”

But death could not have dominion over him, neither did he see corruption. He had power to lay down his life, he had power to take it up again; and therefore, according to his own prediction, he rose again on the third day triumphant from the grave. He appeared to his disciples, he eat and drank with them, conversed frequently with them, was seen by five hundred brethren at once, abode with them for the space of forty days, instructing

* Luke xxiii. 34.

instructing them in the things which pertained to the kingdom of God; and afterwards, in the presence of his Disciples, he visibly ascended up to heaven in a glorious manner.

It was consonant to reason, suitable to the wisdom of the Son of God, and the intentions of Providence, to give a permanent establishment and perpetuity, to that divine Religion which Christ planted in the world. He therefore took measures which were every way proper to promote so important a purpose. He instituted, when upon earth, a sacred College of twelve Apostles. These were appointed as constant attendants upon his person, to learn with exactness and certainty his divine doctrines, to observe with attention his illustrious miracles, and to witness his unspotted innocence, the exalted goodness and dignity of his character. Them also he commissioned to preach the gospel, and in his name to work all kinds of miracles for the confirmation of it. Afterwards, the Lord appointed seventy other Disciples for the same end, and endued them with the like miraculous powers. Some of these were afterwards inspired to record in writing the sacred truths of Christianity, which might remain a standard of evangelical faith to all succeeding generations.

Some have imagined that the number of the Apostles was an allusion to the twelve Tribes of Israel, whilst the seventy Disciples corresponded with the number of the Jewish Sanhedrim. Thus might be intimated, that a period was to be put to the Mosaic œconomy, that the Messiah himself, who was now appearing, was the Head and Law-giver of the Jewish nation, and that they were to regard him and his delegates for the future as their supreme Judges in all matters of religion. These
whom

whom Christ was pleased to install as the Prime Ministers in his Spiritual Kingdom, were not men of eminence and distinction, famous for birth, for powerful connections, for wealth, or learning, or eloquence. The religion of Jesus, noble and divine, was superior to such extrinsic and adventitious circumstances, and the Founder of our Faith made choice of inferior instruments to propagate it, "That the excellency of its power might appear to be of God, and not of man *," that none might suspect the views of secular ambition, or attribute success to merely natural means.

Before Christ left this world and returned unto the Father, he told his Disciples that even when absent, he would not leave them comfortless, that he was then going to heaven, there to prepare mansions of immortal blessedness for all his faithful servants; and that, when seated on the Throne of his glory, he would in a most gracious manner remember them, and from thence pour down upon them, in a miraculous manner, a plentiful portion of the Holy Spirit: That he would lead them into all truth, would teach them all things, and bring whatever he had said to their remembrance; whilst at same time they should be enabled to do greater works than even some they had seen.

Accordingly, about fifty days after Christ's ascension into heaven, and when the time of Pentecost was come, a festival instituted among the Jews, to solemnize the remembrance of receiving the law from Mount Sinai, the fiftieth day after their departure from Egypt, an event of a most extraordinary nature took place, highly favourable for the gospel, greatly conducive to confirm the faith of the Disciples, and to qualify them for their important employment. When they were assembled

* 2 Cor. iv. 7.

bled together in one place at Jerusalem, suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, which filled all the house where they were sitting, such as awakened their deepest attention, and struck them with awe and astonishment. Then there appeared unto them, in a visible and glorious manner, cloven tongues of fire, which sat upon each of them. Then was imparted to them a rich variety of gifts and graces, and particularly a power of speaking instantaneously all kinds of language, a provision so admirably calculated for the speedy propagation of the gospel. "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance *." Different nations, Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, heard in their respective tongues the wonderful works of God, so that all were amazed and marvelled.

These things were not done in a corner; they did not affect obscurity or ambiguity: They did not happen before a few select friends, who might be suspected of fraud or partiality; they were transacted in open day, before promiscuous multitudes of people, in places of general concourse, at Jerusalem the capital of the nation.

The history of the Christian Church may be now distinguished by different æras, or divided into four grand periods.

The First will reach from the commencement of the original and primitive church planted at Jerusalem by the Apostles, to the time of the Emper-

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* Vide Acts chap. ii.

ror Constantine the Great, when the Roman empire became Christian. And this may be reckoned in the year 324, when the government of the whole Roman empire both in the east and west, devolved upon this magnanimous Prince.

The Second, may reach from the time of Constantine the Great, to the establishment of Papal hierarchy and tyranny. This may be reckoned in *anno Domini* 756, when Pepin King of France, and father of Charlemagne, annexed extensive territory to the See of Rome, by which the Pope became a temporal Prince, tho' his power and jurisdiction were considerable before.

The Third, will extend from the foresaid establishment of Papal authority, to the glorious æra of the Reformation. And this may be fixed *anno Domini* 1517, when the celebrated Luther began to make a public appearance against the Church of Rome.

The Fourth period, may run from the Reformation down to this present time.

The first period presents to our view the zealous efforts of the first teachers of Christianity, its amazing progress in the world, its wonderful effects upon the professors of it, in reforming their faith and practice, and supporting them under ten grievous persecutions, from the time of Nero, in the year 64, after the birth of Christ, till that under Diocletian, *A. D.* 303.

The first Christian church was properly founded by the Apostles themselves at Jerusalem. Although the bulk of the Jewish nation rejected the Messiah, yet great numbers believed in him. A multitude of the priests and scribes came to acknowledge him. Three thousand Jews were converted at one time by St. Peter, and daily there was a fresh accession of new members. Infallible authority informs

forms us, that “ the word of God increased, and
“ the number of the disciples multiplied in Jeru-
“ salem greatly, and a great company of the
“ priests were obedient to the faith *.”

Religion itself, sublime and spiritual as it is, must be cloathed in part with external form, to give it a body, a visibility, a respectable character and subsistence in the world. Civil society cannot be preserved without order and government, subordination and supremacy. The Christian church has intimate alliance to both these ; and besides its own sacred and more solemn institutions, it must derive stability and splendor from a steady and well regulated polity. The great lines of this are stroked out in Scripture, our Saviour himself refers to the authority of the church, points out subordination in it, and establishes the grand fundamental rule of legal procedure, by two or three witnesses†. Apostolical precept and practice serve farther to illustrate the subject, for the better modelling the frame of the Christian church.

The principal employment of the Apostles was to preach the gospel. That they might attend to this important work with greater assiduity, they made choice of elders and deacons, whose chief occupation it was to take care of the poor, to receive the oblations of the rich, and to assist in managing the civil affairs of the church. This burden was increased by the overflowing charity of the opulent to their indigent brethren. By this there was a kind of community in goods, and that only for some time voluntarily established among the first Christians. The peculiar situation of their circumstances suggested this measure as proper, though not required by their religion, nor obligatory on succeeding times. Nay, I think it evi-

* Acts vi. 7, vid. also ch. 2. † Mat. xviii. 15, 16, 17, 18.

evident even from apostolic history, that this was but of short duration among the first converts themselves. This may be safely inferred, from the frequent exhortations given to the rich, to communicate in part to the poor, from the frequent mention of those liberalities which were conveyed from one place to another, whilst the distinctions of poor and rich were evidently maintained, and from the occasional voluntary supplies, which St. Paul himself received from time to time. Nor can any inference be from hence drawn to the disadvantage of christianity, as if this would prove a bait and temptation to the poor to profess it, when by parity of reason, it would be an equal or greater discouragement to the rich; not to speak of the common calamities and hardships, in which all ranks of Christians were involved at that early period.

Although the Jewish converts might at first occasionally attend the service of the temple and of the synagogue, and though they did not at once entirely renounce all the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, though we find Paul himself * circumcising Timothy, for the sake of the Jews, going into the temple, and purifying himself with some who had taken a vow †, yet were they soon instructed as to the comparative insignificance of these outward observances, now that the superior light of the gospel had broke in amongst them, and that this new and more glorious dispensation was to supersede the former. Thereupon they thought it proper to hold separate assemblies for divine worship by themselves, particularly on the first day of the week. In these the Scriptures were read, there they were explained in an evangelical manner, and applied in all their proper passages with peculiar
C felicity

* Acts xvi. 3.

† Acts xxi. 23, 24, 26.

felicity to Jesus Christ *, the great object of faith and trust. They likewise joined together in pious prayer and psalmody, singing devout songs and spiritual hymns to God and Christ. The practice of preaching the doctrine of the cross, and the great duties of the gospel was introduced, and they celebrated in a solemn manner the holy eucharist, the grand memorial of Christ's dying love; whilst the sacrament of baptism was dispensed as occasions offered, sometimes by immersion, at other times by sprinkling.

Affairs of business relative to the external order and peace of the church, likewise demanded attention. These occasioned the convening of several councils at Jerusalem, in order to judge and determine of matters. † We find in particular, one assembly consisting of one hundred and twenty persons, at the solemn election of Mathias into the Apostleship, to supply the vacancy made by the apostacy and fall of Judas Iscariot. ‡ Upon another occasion, the Apostles thought proper to convene a multitude of the disciples, in order to appoint certain men of eminence and credit, to manage the ministrations of charity with a prudent and impartial hand, when "they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch."

|| A third assembly of the Apostles and elders was held upon a very important occasion. When the Gentiles embraced the Christian faith, some zealous Jews still misled by the prejudices of education, and impressed with a veneration for the Mosaic cere-

* The Epistle to the Hebrews, and several addresses of the Apostles recorded in the book of Acts, may be considered as a specimen.

† Acts ch. i. ‡ Acts ch. vi. || Acts ch. xv.

ceremonies, would have obtruded upon them the rite of circumcision, and commanded them to keep the law of Moses as necessary to salvation. This created no small dissention and disquiet. The matter was maturely considered in a public council, and a solemn determination given, declaring the liberty both of Jews and Gentiles, *viz.* their exemption from the yoke of the ceremonial law, a burden, as St. James said in his speech on that occasion, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear.

The designs and views of our Lord's disciples extended far beyond the limits of Jerusalem. They traversed all the cities and villages of Judea preaching the gospel; next they went to Samaria, and afterwards they divided themselves into different bodies, and travelled into all the kingdoms and countries of the world, propagating the christian faith, ordaining presbyters and elders in every city, and planting churches wherever they came. This is confirmed by evangelic history, and by other † ancient and credible records. Therein we are informed of the famous churches in Asia, of the churches at Rome, Colosse, Corinth, Thessalonica, Philippi, &c. The active and flaming zeal of the Apostles made them fly with ardour over the world, to spread the glad tidings of eternal salvation by Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God and Saviour of the world. Accordingly, they carried the light of the glorious gospel into Egypt, Marmorica, and Mauritania; into Idumæa, and Syria; into Ethiopia, Pontus, and Galatia; into Persia, Media, and Carmania. St. Paul in a particular manner was indefatigable, preaching the gospel both among Jews and Gentiles, through an immense

† Millar's Propagation of Christianity, 2 vols. Dr Arth. Young on idolatry, and F. Albert Fabricius, — *Lux evangelii toti orbi exoriens.*

immense tract of country from Jerusalem unto Illyricum, as also in Italy. And some are of opinion, that he penetrated into Spain, France, and the British isles. All this was done, and with amazing success, within 30 years after Christ's ascension into heaven. And thus was fulfilled in a most remarkable manner his own prediction, concerning the speedy spread of his religion in the world *.

If we look to natural causes, and consider the feeble instruments which were employed, very unequal to so great an undertaking; if we bring into view the vast difficulty of eradicating old and deep impressions, which superstition and time immemorial had made on the minds of men, and of persuading them to abjure and renounce their ancient opinions and usages, and to embrace a new religion; if we recollect that the teachers of christianity were strictly prohibited all the artifices of fraud or violence, and that they themselves had to encounter innumerable hazards and hardships and much opposition, we must necessarily ascribe the rapid progress of the gospel to the miraculous interposition of providence, and from thence infer its heavenly original.

The Apostles proposed to the world the sublime religion of their Divine Master in its native and amiable simplicity. This might no doubt excite the admiration of a few select spirits. But the stupendous miracles which they performed, commanded the attention of all. They foretold future events, they healed all manner of diseases, they dispossessed demons, they spoke all kinds of language, some they struck dead, others they raised from the grave, and were enabled to confer miraculous gifts upon others in the name of Jesus.

Thus

* Matth. xxiv. 14. Mark xiii. 10. Mattli. xxviii. 19. Col. i. 23.

Thus a divine power accompanied these spiritual heralds, enforced their ministrations with a sacred energy, and bestowed upon them an irresistible authority.

Therefore they went forth and preached every where with most surprising success,—“the Lord
“working with them, and confirming the word
“with signs following,—God bearing them wit-
“ness with prodigies and wonders, and with di-
“vers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost *.”

Neither was it a mere external profession of Christianity which prevailed in this early period. The lives and manners of the primitive Christians are justly celebrated, and held forth to view as models of exalted sanctity and virtue. Men forsook the superstition and licentiousness of heathenism, and embraced the pure and spiritual religion of Jesus from principle. This they did in the face of danger, trials and persecutions. They had to combat the prejudices of education, and subject themselves to the severe though reasonable regulations of the gospel. This they would not have been forward to do in their then present circumstances, had they not inwardly approved of them, and firmly resolved to conform to them. They were animated with the zeal of new converts, and inspired with ardent faith and charity. The strict exercise of ecclesiastical discipline also proved a sacred fence.

The remembrance and notoriety of those grand events and facts which had so recently happened, on which their religion was founded, lay close in their thoughts, and a frequent display of miracle overawed and enlivened them. Even their most implacable enemies were sometimes obliged to do justice

* Mark xvi. 20. Heb. ii. 4.

justice to their characters, to acknowledge their innocence, and admire their virtues.

But whilst we contemplate this delightful scene, behold with pleasure the conversion of the Gentiles, and mark the trophies and triumphs of the gospel among Pagan and Barbarous nations, must we not feel sensations of sorrow and surprise at the obstinacy and infidelity of the Jews, the once favourite people of God? Blinded with prejudice, and actuated by the most ignoble and perverse passions, they had rejected the Messiah, and crucified the Prince of Life and Lord of Glory who had come to redeem the world. Notwithstanding the remarkable completion of ancient prophecy as centering in him; in contempt of all that variegated and solemn scene of stupendous miracle which they had seen, the great body of that nation fully continued in unbelief, in darkness and delusion. They were fired with rage against the Christians, inflicted the most violent hardships upon them, persecuted them unto death, and took all imaginable methods to disparage and extirpate their religion. They ran into all kinds of licentiousness, were immersed in such universal corruption and profligacy, that their own historian Josephus declares, That if the sword of the Romans had not been drawn against them, he verily believed that fire and brimstone had been poured down from heaven upon them, as it had been on Sodom and Gomorrah.

And indeed, the divine vengeance did at last overtake them in so signal and astonishing a manner, as is not to be paralleled in human history. It fatally ended in the total destruction of their temple and polity, in the ruin of their city and country, and the dispersion of the Jews. This awful catastrophe was particularly predicted by
Christ,

Christ, * and marked in such strong characters, and with such high colouring of figurative expression, agreeable to the genius of prophecy, as to be thought by some partly descriptive of the day of judgment. But it had a dreadful accomplishment so soon as the year 70, about 36 years after the death of Christ, whose blood the Jews had imprecated upon themselves and their children, little suspecting the fatal fulfilment of their own prayers.

It was usual among the easterns to express themselves in bold and metaphorical terms. Their writers describe any grand revolutions in sublime language and pompous imagery, and used, as in hieroglyphic writing, to represent states and empires, kings and nobles, by the luminaries of heaven, the prosperity of the one by the clear effulgence of the other, the adversity of the former, by an eclipse of splendour in the latter. † The Psalmists and Prophets of the Old Testament use this elevated and poetical stile. Our Saviour adopts it, and naturally applies it to events which were of a most extraordinary and striking nature; and the spirit and solemnity of prophecy rendered this peculiarly suitable. Not only were uncommon and unheard-of calamities to overtake the Jewish nation, but their civil and ecclesiastical polity, their religion, their laws, and government though of Divine original, were to be dissolved. A more perfect system was to be introduced, and built as it were upon the ruins of what was hitherto supported even by sacred authority. This did anew interpose in a remarkable manner, to substitute something

* Matth. ch. xxiv. Mark ch. xiii. Luke ch. xxi.

† Vid. Dr Newton on the Prophecies, vol. 2. p. 304, also Warburton's Divine Legation, vol. 2. book 4. &c.

something more noble and refined, and to erect a still more spiritual empire, better adapted to the nature of man, and the general circumstances of the world, and more agreeable to the plans of Providence.

All this seemed to require a more than ordinary apparatus. These revolutions in the lower world, were ushered in by signs and tokens in the upper. The sun, the moon and stars are represented as interfering, amidst the deep distress of nations upon earth, whilst the waters of the sea are agitated, and the waves and winds rage tumultuously, and all nature appears as it were in commotion. Eclipses, comets, surprising prodigies and meteors in the air, which actually preceded the ruin of Jerusalem, the many awful circumstances that attended it, and the very important consequences which ensued, amply justify such manner of speaking as our Saviour makes use of. High and awakening as the prophetic description was, it did not rise above the dreadful events which actually took place. Christ foretold the appearance of many false prophets, who pretending to be the Messiah would do incredible mischief. However pacific the present disposition of sovereign states and princes might then be, and however calm and settled the public tranquillity at that juncture was, though the Jewish nation was unembroiled in any wars with their neighbours, or disputes with the Romans, yet he plainly predicted that great commotions and disturbances should soon spring up, that foreign wars and intestine broils would quickly commence, that nation should rise up against nation, kingdom against kingdom, and that a man's enemies should be those of his own house: That severe famines and pestilences should rage, and sweep away vast multitudes of people: That
dreadful

dreadful earthquakes, and trouble and anguish of various kinds, should increase the general calamity: That fearful sights and signs from heaven should alarm and terrify an astonished world: That armed hosts should encompass Jerusalem, cast a trench about it, hem in the inhabitants on every side, cover them at last with desolation, and raze their glorious Temple to the ground, so that not one stone should be left upon another, of that most magnificent fabrick. All this was literally fulfilled, as Josephus the Jewish historian, one of their own commanders, and an eye-witness, relates.

False prophets actually arose, who seduced and ruined many credulous people. The Romans were involved in wars with the Syrians, Samaritans, and other neighbouring nations, before they brought the flames of war into Judea. The Jews divided among themselves, and split into numerous and violent parties, so that by intestine faction and sedition, they spilt more blood, and spread more dreadful havock, than what their very enemies did.

There were also terrible convulsions of the earth in Apamea, Laodicea, and Campania*. A violent famine raged in the reign of Claudius which is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles†; and the same is likewise recorded in profane history‡. Amazing omens and prodigies appeared in the skies, contending armies, chariots and horses of fire: And a blazing star, in the form of a sword, hung over the city of Jerusalem for a whole year together before it was destroyed. This is attested by Josephus || the Jewish, and Tacitus **, a Roman historian.

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At

* Tacit. Annal. lib. 12. sect. 43. 58. † Acts xi. 28.

‡ Sueton. Claud. cap. 28.—Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 2. cap. 8.

|| Joseph. Bell. Judaic. lib. 6. cap. 5.

** Tacit. Hist. lib. 5. sect. 13.

At length the fatal period arrived: The flames of war were kindled in the 12th year of Nero's reign, and the 66th of the Christian æra, by an insurrection of the Jews against the Romans, exasperated by the cruelty of Gessius Florus their Governor, and of the Syrians who dwelt at Cæsaria, whom he countenanced. It spread into Egypt and the east, and many Jews were massacred not only in Judea, but also at Alexandria and Antioch. When Nero was informed of the revolt, he sent Vespasian with troops to quell the rebellion. In two campaigns he took all the cities of Galilee, and prepared to besiege Jerusalem in form. At this crisis the Emperor died. Vespasian being called to succeed him, ordered his son Titus to prosecute the war. This he accordingly did with consummate bravery and resolution. He laid siege to Jerusalem, a city of large extent, and very populous of itself, and where incredible numbers of people were then assembled from all quarters, on account of the approaching Passover. The place was strongly fortified, and well provided with stores of all kinds. The inhabitants, tho' miserably divided among themselves, yet proved very resolute against the common enemy, and obstinately refused all proposals of peace which Titus made them. He at last carried the place by assault, after a siege of six months. A powerful enemy rushed upon them from without, in an irresistible manner; pestilence, fire and famine raged within the city, violent factions and jealousies tore the people to pieces, so that blood and slaughter, cruelty and misery, rioted in every quarter. The Temple itself was set on fire, tho' the strictest orders were given to preserve it, and, with the city of Jerusalem, was razed to the very foundations, and laid in ruins. A few towers only were left as mournful monuments of former grandeur.

grandeur. Authentic history informs us, that Turnus Rufus plowed up the ground on which the temple stood; and, notwithstanding the most zealous efforts, it has never been rebuilt. A Turkish mosque at this day pollutes the spot on which the sacred Temple of Jerusalem once stood. Just now, and for ages past, the holy land has been possessed by Mahometan and Antichristian powers. No human strength or device could possibly frustrate the prediction of Christ, or preserve from destruction even the sanctuary itself, the pride and glory of the Jewish nation.

The holy Temple of Jerusalem was one of the most famous and superb structures in the world. It was built mostly of marble, and that so white, as to appear at a distance like a mountain of snow. Some of the stones were of an incredible size, and said by Josephus to be forty-five cubits long, five in depth, and six broad. Its gates and porticos were most magnificent, the whole fabrick was of exquisite workmanship, curiously carved, richly gilt within and without, furnished with innumerable vessels of gold and silver, and adorned with many costly gifts hung around it. Its elevated situation upon mount Moriah, almost in the center of the city, and over-looking spacious and fertile plains, contributed to render it a very pompous and splendid spectacle. On account of its immense opulence, as well as grandeur, it was justly celebrated as one of the wonders of the world, and is taken notice of even by profane authors *. We observe the Disciples sensibly struck with the sight of this glorious edifice, and with a kind of rapture pointing it out to our Saviour †. “Master, say they, “See what manner of stones and buildings are
“here!”

* Tacit. lib. 5. sect. 8. Josephus is full of it.

† Matth. xxiv. 1. Mark xiii. 1.

“ here !” Neither was it an unimportant object. Noble and stately buildings, especially those that are consecrated for the sacred solemnities of religion, naturally excite pleasure and admiration. Nor perhaps can opulent cities or countries better bestow part of their wealth, than in erecting and endowing Christian churches, if not to all that pitch of grandeur and decoration, which might distract the mind or occasion superstition, yet with that decency, elegance and liberality, which may preserve religion from contempt, give encouragement to its Ministers, and prevent offence to any worshipper.

With respect to the number of Jews destroyed at this period†, Josephus reckons that eleven hundred thousand were slain at the siege of Jerusalem, about two hundred thousand more in different places during the war, and that one hundred thousand were made prisoners. The most distinguished of these were reserved to grace the triumph of Titus. Some of them were exposed to wild beasts on the public theatres ; others were compelled to fight as gladiators against one another, whilst many fled for refuge to foreign countries.

One species of misery to which great multitudes were subjected, by a singular judgment of heaven, is remarkable. Not forty years before, the unbelieving Jews cried out with a barbarous voice against the Son of God, “ Crucify him, crucify him.” And now they themselves felt the pains of crucifixion, which recoiled upon them with a tenfold vengeance. For the dreadful miseries which the Jews underwent during the siege, forced great numbers of them to steal out by night into the Roman camp. But Titus, tho’ esteemed a good natured Prince, yet with a view to reduce the city to submission

* Joseph. lib. 2. cap. 14. 18, &c.

submission by terror, ordered all who came out of Jerusalem to be crucified before the walls. This was executed with such rigour, that for several days, not less than five hundred unfortunate persons were crucified each day, till there was neither room left to fix crosses in, nor wood sufficient to supply the demand.

The peculiar protection vouchsafed to the Christians who were in the city is equally memorable. The first approach of the Roman army, under Cestius Gallus, President of Syria, threatened immediate destruction a short time before. But he unexpectedly withdrew his forces, and suspended military operations. Thus an intimation and opportunity were happily given to the Christians to retire, who believed the words which Jesus had spoken, and observed the previous signs that did prognosticate the tragical event. And although the desolation of Jerusalem was then near at hand, yet was it providentially postponed for a while. Then was the critical juncture for regarding our Saviour's salutary caution, of abandoning the city, and retreating to the mountains. This the Christians both at Jerusalem and throughout Judea accordingly did. Ecclesiastical history informs us that they retired to the city Pella, in a mountainous country, not far from the wilderness, on the confines of Judea and Arabia, and thus were wonderfully saved from the impending calamity.

Jerusalem lay in ruins, till it was partly rebuilt by the Roman Emperor *Ælius Adrian*, a little without the precincts of the ancient city. *Epiphanius* informs us, that this Prince, making a progress through the eastern parts of the Empire, visited Jerusalem forty-seven years after its destruction by *Titus*. The resolution he then formed of rebuilding it, was not executed till towards the latter end
of

of his reign. Upon this, the Jews projected the scheme of recovering their native country out of the hands of their oppressors. Accordingly, about the year of our Lord 134, they revolted against the Romans. They chose one Barchochab for King, and ravaged Judea and Syria. For some time they proved successful, and made themselves masters of *Ælia*, or the new Jerusalem*. Appian, who lived at that time, says, it was again besieged by the Romans, and entirely consumed by fire. The Roman arms were every where victorious. The Jews were subdued by a dreadful slaughter. Fifty of their strongest castles, and 985 of their best towns were demolished. 580,000 men were slain by the sword, besides a vast multitude who perished by fire, famine and sickness. An immense number of the Jews who survived this general massacre, were sold like cattle, and carried over the face of the earth as so many slaves.

Notwithstanding this, they afterwards made successive attempts to shake off the Roman yoke, but all in vain. The Emperor Julian, called the Apostate, an inveterate enemy to Christianity, began to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem, with a view to frustrate the prophecies of Scripture. He gave immense sums for this purpose, and endeavoured to strengthen the hands of the Jews in this undertaking, with the whole power of the Empire. He assigned the charge of inspection to Alypius of Antioch, who had been sometime before Lieutenant in Britain. He set about the work with the greatest vigour, and was assisted in it by the Governor of the province. But providence frowned, and in a miraculous manner defeated the design, as several authors declare. In particular †, Ammianus Marcellinus,

* Appian, de Bell. Syr. p. 119.

† Ammian. Marcell. lib. 22. *Vide* Warburton's Julian.

cellinus, a Gentile in religion, and a warm defender of Julian, expressly says, "That whilst Alypius, aided by the Roman Governor, was forwarding the work with all his might, terrible globes of fire issued from the foundations, which they first rent by violent shocks; and the workmen who attempted to begin the work a-new, were at different times burned alive, whereupon the place became inaccessible, and the enterprize fell to the ground."

Since that time, we do not read of any vigorous efforts made by the Jews to recover their liberty. Palestine has been in constant subjection to some foreign power, as first to the Romans, and afterwards to the Saracens, then to the Franks, next to the Mamalucs, and now to the Turks.

Perhaps it was proper to dilate a little on these important matters, which relate to the ancient peculiar people of God. Thus too, we have seen a remarkable period put to the Mosaic dispensation, and a famous prophecy of our Saviour faithfully fulfilled, which serves to establish the Christian: We have seen the signal judgments of heaven inflicted upon the Jews for their infidelity and wickedness, whilst the remains of them are dispersed over the globe, unmixed with other people, and still carrying about with them national badges of distinction. However, this their wonderful separate preservation leaves room for a visible conversion of them to Christianity, expected in the latter days, agreeable to various prophecies concerning them in holy writ; the completion of which will make the world resound with joy, and greatly increase the laurels and triumphs of the gospel.

We must now cast our eyes on other objects, that arise within the period at present under review.

Notwith-

Notwithstanding the general spread and purity of the gospel in the primitive times, yet various sects and heresies soon sprang up in the Christian church. Many of the Jewish converts retained a fond attachment to the Mosaic rites and ceremonies, and endeavoured to intermingle these with the doctrines and institutions of the gospel. Judaizing teachers appeared in the Apostle's days; and Paul, in particular, took frequent opportunities to reprehend them. The very first dispute and dissension we read of arose from that quarter. The grand article in Christianity was, justification by faith in Christ, and through his merits and mediation, whilst at same time, holiness of heart and life was required as an indispensable qualification. But these Jews urged the necessity of observing the law of Moses, without which, they said, salvation was not to be expected. An Apostolic council hereupon was convened at Jerusalem, as formerly noticed, which determined the matter with great propriety, and declared a happy exemption from the burden of Jewish ceremonies. Still however this leaven wrought, and proved introductory to farther abuses. Men were not satisfied with the pure simplicity of the gospel. Captivated with a love of innovation, prone to be misled by the force of giddy imagination, and too credulous to the inventions of designing leaders, they were often carried away to meditate a change or an adulteration of that Divine Religion which Jesus taught.

But not only did the Jews affect to blend their own traditions and usages with the genuine doctrines of the gospel, some of the Gentile converts were likewise desirous of introducing part of their peculiar opinions and customs into the Christian system. Many of the Pagan philosophers converted to Christianity, were yet deeply tinged with notions

notions of false philosophy, and unfortunately endeavoured to transfer these to that new religion which they embraced*. To make the coalition more conformable and of a piece, they used the most ingenious means to accommodate the principles of the gospel to their own philosophical schemes. Thus they corrupted the sublime religion of the Son of God, and did new-model it according to their own foolish fancies. Both the Oriental and Grecian philosophy thus proved productive of much mischief and great disturbance to the Christian church. From their bosom originally issued most of those sects and heresies which chiefly haunted and perplexed the world during the three first centuries. A minute detail of these would almost constitute a volume by itself, and would be more curious than instructive, considering the superior light of later and more established times.

We find St. Paul, in several of his epistles, naming and condemning some of the primitive hereticks, such as Alexander, Hymenæus, Hermogenes, Demas, and Diotrephes. They first became corrupters of Christianity, and some of them afterwards apostates from it. Simon Magus is reckoned by some the Arch-heretic. We read of him in the Acts of the Apostles†, where he is represented as a magician, who bewitched the people of Samaria with his forceries. He gave himself out for some eminent person, and affected to be called "The great power of God." He was struck with wonder, when he beheld the miracles wrought by Philip, believed and was baptized. But impiously he proposed to purchase the gift of the Holy Ghost

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* For illustration of this, *vide* Dr Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. translated into English by Dr M'Lean, vol. I. p. 150.

† Acts, chap. viii.

with money, for which he was sharply reprehended by St. Peter, as being still in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. He was a Samaritan by birth, and studied philosophy at Alexandria. But his talents and acquisitions he turned into the channel of magic, and became an infamous impostor. By a profession of Christianity for some time, he intended to derive credit to his audacious pretensions: Afterwards, he opposed the progress of the gospel, and travelled into foreign kingdoms with this malicious design. He maintained the eternity of matter, and the existence of a supreme evil principle, which, in his opinion, shared the empire of the universe in conjunction with a benevolent Being. He taught that matter moved of itself, from an intrinsic and necessary activity, and from its substance produced the evil genius, with all its attendant train of miseries. He likewise asserted the doctrine of fate, the indifference of human actions, the power of magic and divination, with a multiplicity of other errors. Nay, he pretended that in his person resided one of the most powerful of the *Æons*, or divine *Genii*, sprung from the *Pleroma*, or bosom of Deity; and that he had come, by the command of God, to abolish the empire of those who had formed the material system.

Menander, another Heretic, was also of Samaria. It is said that he was a scholar of Simon; and he seems to have adopted most of his absurdities. He also set up to be one of the divine *Æons*, a member of the celestial family, and said he was sent by Heaven to rescue the souls of men who were imprisoned within the body, and to aid them in their conflicts with the demons who had usurped a terrestrial empire here below.

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The Nicolaitans were sectaries, who at the same time that they professed the doctrines of the gospel, abandoned themselves to licentious practices, particularly fornication, and eating of things which were offered to idols. They are particularly mentioned in the Apocalypse*, or Revelation of St. John, and there their character and conduct are represented as abominable.

The Cerinthians derive their name from Cerinthus, a founder of an heretical sect. He was of the Jewish nation, but was educated at Alexandria. He attempted to combine with Christianity notions and errors drawn from different sources, and tempered matters into such a form, as to give it a strong cast of Judaism. Yet, by a particular inconsistency, he taught that the God of the Jews, though descended from supreme Deity, fell into apostacy; that Christ was one of the divine Æons; that he appeared in order to oppose the God of the Jews; that he united himself with Jesus, who was born of the Virgin, and who alone suffered upon the cross, when *Christ*, whom he would distinguish, ascended to heaven. His followers were further instructed to worship Christ in conjunction with the Father, but to disown the God of the Jews, yet to retain some of the Mosaic rites. Cerinthus appears to be the first who started the opinion of a Millenium, and asserted that Christ was again to be united with Jesus, and to reign in a triumphant manner upon earth for a thousand years, during which time the saints were to enjoy all kind of happiness, and that afterwards they were to be translated to celestial regions.

The Nazarenes and Ebionites were such who still continued to observe the law of Moses, when the rest of the Jewish converts judged themselves released

* Rev. ii. 6. 14, 15.

fed from its obligations, by embracing Christianity. At length, in the reign of Adrian, these zealots for Judaism separated from the ordinary assemblies of Christians, and worshipped by themselves.

One of the most famous sects was that of the Gnostics, which was indeed prior to some I have mentioned, and with whose notions many of the rest were deeply tinged,

And even under this general denomination most of the sects were classed, who were misled by certain Platonic principles, and who confounded the pure doctrines of the gospel with mixtures of oriental philosophy, especially such as respected the creation of the world, and the origin of evil. The Gnostics obtained this appellation, from a vain conceit that they had arrived to a superlative height of *Gnosis*, or knowledge, and that this alone was perfectly sufficient, though they indulged to every irregularity in practice. They affirmed there were two great principles in nature, the one *good*, and the other *evil*; one the author of all excellence and happiness, the other the cause of sin and misery. They multiplied their genealogies of deity, from whence numberless *Æons* *, or a kind of inferior divinities sprang, a favourite doctrine in oriental philosophy. They said, the soul of man was of the same substance with God. They denied the authority of the Old Testament, as also the divinity of Christ. They held several apocryphal

books

* *Æon* is derived from the Greek word *αιων*, *æon*, *mundus*, *seculum*, also *eternus*, *αιων*, i. e. always existing, eternal, everlasting. This term was originally given to the supreme Being, but afterwards, by the oriental Sages and Gnostics, to inferior spirits, proceeding from the supreme in one eternal chain, of which our world was the last link that terminated the whole. Some of the Gnostics supposed the *Æons* to be the celestial progeny of two Deities of different sexes, which were the immediate offspring of the *Pleroma*, the great original parent of all.

books as of sacred original, such as the Revelations of Adam, the History of Noah's wife, &c. They attributed the creation of this lower world to the energy of the evil principle, and considered matter as having an obliquity in it necessarily tending to vice. They thereupon denied that Christ was clothed with a real body, or that he actually suffered upon the cross. And as they entertained many wild and romantic imaginations, they took unbounded liberty in altering and mangling the New Testament writings, in order to force them into a kind of compliance with their peculiar tenets.

Towards the conclusion of the second century a new sect arose, which spread through the greatest part of the Roman empire, and proved very prejudicial to genuine Christianity. Ammonius Saccas was the founder of it, a man of vast genius and profound erudition. He was descended from Christian parents, and had his education at Alexandria in Egypt, the great seat of learning. The votaries of that new philosophy which he introduced, assumed the title of Platonics, because they regarded the sentiments of Plato concerning the deity, and the soul, and an invisible state, as more congruous to the genius of Christianity, than the opinions of other Pagan philosophers. Yet they paid a compliment to all sects and religions, and were of opinion that some vestiges of truth were to be found among each of them. They therefore proposed to investigate this with care and candor, wheresoever they could perceive any traces of it, to distinguish the good from the bad, to make a wise and accurate selection, and to frame a complete and regular system from the whole. From hence they obtained the appellation of Eclectics. Their system of universal philosophy was considered
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by Ammonius as the sole standard of religious truth. By this touchstone, he was to try every species of philosophy, every sect and party, and even the Christian doctrine itself. This bold and extensive project gratified his ardent love of novelty, and afforded an ample subject on which his luxuriant imagination might expatiate at large. By this romantic scheme, an heterogeneous system of religion arose, composed of all the religions in the world, Christian, Jewish, and Heathen. Each was to suffer from such an unnatural effort, whilst, by the magic of invention, fancy, and allegory, every thing was to be explained, softened, or exaggerated, so as to effectuate the project of a general coalition. Ammonius maintained, that all the mistakes concerning religion were occasioned by departing from the pure and ancient philosophy of the East. He therefore revived the doctrines which were received in Egypt *, concerning the Deity and the universe as constituting one great *whole*, concerning the eternity of the world, the empire of providence, the nature, properties, and duration of the human soul, and the government of the world by demons. He was of opinion that these invisible beings were so many inferior agents of providence, but that they had been elevated into the rank of gods by the superstition of men. Thus the Egyptian mythology was associated with the doctrines of Plato, and both were afterwards intermingled with the revelations of the gospel.

He disowned the divinity of our Saviour; he permitted a kind of worship to be paid to demons; he enjoined great austerity of life, and a rigorous discipline of the body; extolled an entire abstraction from the world, and recommended the raptures

* Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. translated into English by Dr M'Laine, vol. I. p. 140, &c. 8vo. edit.

tures and extacies of contemplative life. This gave rise to a particular sect, distinguished by the name of Mystics. These multiplied exceedingly, particularly in Syria, Egypt, and other eastern provinces, and from thence they travelled into Europe.

The double doctrine, as it was called, which certain moralists now introduced, did very much contribute to establish the mystical notions, and to produce the tribe of Ascetics. Our Saviour established one rule of faith and manners for all his followers. But a distinction was now found out, an ordinary and an extraordinary rule : the one, it was said, was intended for men engaged in the active scenes of life ; the other, for more elevated minds, fond of solitude, and enamoured with celestial objects. Upon this, incredible numbers bid an absolute farewell to the world, retreated into cells and solitary places, renounced alliance with mankind, and all the natural connections of society, became inflated with enthusiastical notions, the characteristic of the Mystics ; whilst those of the Ascetic order, denied themselves all the comforts of life, macerated their bodies by watching and fasting, prohibited matrimony, trade, and commerce, and all use of wine or flesh, and wrapt themselves up in silence and solitude. Thus they imagined they would ascend in sublimer contemplations to Deity, hold more intimate communion with Heaven, invite supernatural illapses of the spirit, while they held in contempt all terrestrial scenes, and disregarded the feelings and obligations of social life. This was something similar to the notions of the Pythagoreans and Platonics. This resembled the doctrine and practice of the Essenes among the Jews, and the Christian church has been strongly infected with it. Hence monks have multiplied to such a degree, of many various orders and denominations ; hence number-

less rites and institutions of superstition have been substituted in the room of virtue and real religion; hence the celibacy of the priestly order has been established in the church of Rome, with many usages and ceremonies and penances, which tend to nourish gloom and melancholy, and to give countenance to visionary ideas and feelings, very remote from the genuine spirit of the gospel, and inconsistent with our station and character in human life.

There were various other heretical sects which infested the Christian world, particularly the Valentinians, the Marcionites and Montanists, which may be considered as so many branches of the great Gnostic sect, whilst each superadded peculiarities of their own, repugnant both to reason and sound Christianity.

In process of time a new kind of sect appeared, called Manichæans. This title they derived from Manes, or Manichæus their founder. He was a Persian by birth, educated among the Magi, and afterwards became himself one of their number. He was deeply skilled in all the Persian philosophy, but embraced the gospel, though with reserves of a very pernicious nature. His genius was sublime and penetrating, but prone to fanaticism. He formed the adventurous design of combining the doctrine of the Magi with the system of Christianity. He impiously pretended to be the Paraclete sent by God, in order to compleat that salvation which, he said, Christ had left unfinished. He himself was put to death by Varanes I. King of Persia, but he had a number of followers who were unfortunately deceived by this grand impostor. He maintained the existence of two principles, the one good, the other evil. The first he called *light*, the other *darkness*. These two Beings were the Creators of all

all things, some good, others bad, according to their own respective natures, whilst they themselves were subject to a superintending power, whom he called God. When the Manichæan sect assembled together, they elected a President to represent Jesus Christ, twelve rulers as representatives of the twelve Apostles, and seventy bishops to stand as symbols of the seventy disciples. But to give a full account of their tenets and proceedings would greatly exceed the plan I propose *.

Noetus of Smyrna started hazardous controversies concerning the Holy Trinity. He affirmed that the Father was only God, and that not the Son but the Father united himself to the person of Christ. In the middle of the third century, Sabelius arose, and engaged warmly in those theological speculations. He was an African bishop, and taught his followers to believe that there were indeed three persons in the Godhead; but then, he denied they were distinct or really subsisting, and considered them only as so many mere names, intended to represent the different attributes, energies or operations of the divine nature. His opinions were embraced with some variation by some, who affected to be leaders of new sects, particularly, by Beryllus an Arabian bishop in Bozrah, and by Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch.

The Novatians occasioned much disturbance in the Church by their ill-directed zeal and severity. This sect was founded by Novatian, a presbyter of the church of Rome. He was possessed of a considerable share of learning and eloquence, but extremely rigid and uncharitable to all who had once been excommunicated by the Church. Whatever

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penance

* Vid. A work titled—*Commentarii de rebus Christianorum ante Constantinum Magnum.*

penance such had submitted to, and whatever proofs of penitence they had given, the door of admittance was still kept shut. Though they did not deny the possibility of salvation to them, and allowed that they might find an entrance into heaven, yet if they had fallen into any heinous sins after baptism, they refused such all access to the communion of their church. With singular vanity and arrogance they assumed the boasted title of *cathari*, as if purified from all the dregs of corruption, and would not receive into their society any persons whatever from the general body of Christians, except they would submit to be re-baptised.

We must not be surprised to find sects and heresies springing up, even in the early periods of the Church. All the new converts to Christianity, were at first composed of those who were originally either Jews or Gentiles. Each were tinctured with the prejudices of their education, and of their native peculiar profession. The generality did upon their conversion adopt the Christian religion, in its genuine purity and simplicity. But there were not a few who affected innovation, who retained a fond attachment to some of their ancient notions and usages; and men of genius and ambition, of a superstitious or enthusiastical turn, made bold efforts to blend some of their old philosophy and of their former religion with Christianity. In every society there are some men who may be misled by mistake, or of a designing temper, some warm and factious spirits, to whom the ordinary stream of life runs too smooth, and such will always be fond to distinguish themselves by peculiar novelties.

Even in these early times councils were sometimes solemnly convened, particularly in the third century, at Rome, at Carthage, in Palestine, and

in various other places both in Asia and Africa. These were employed not only in regulating the affairs of religion in general, but also in a special manner to check the progress of schism and heresy.

Eminent men likewise appeared, the fathers of the church, who entered the list, and combated the false opinions of heretical teachers. They endeavoured to rescue the pure gospel of Christ out of the hands of such as would mingle or misrepresent it, and to guard and vindicate its sacred doctrines.

In this important work they were preceded by the Apostles themselves, particularly, Paul and John. These perceived and detected several heresies beginning to make head, and foretold the coming of Antichrist in still greater power and splendor, "with all deceivableness of unrighteousness." We find the apostle Paul, on a variety of occasions, cautioning Christian converts against the seducing arts of designing and mistaken men *. "Beware, (says he), lest any man spoil you through philosophy, and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."—"Let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath."—"Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things, which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind."—"Why are ye subject to ordinances after the commandments and doctrines of men?"—"Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in worship, and humility, and neglecting of the
"body."

* Col. ii. 8. 16. 18. 20. 22, 23.

“ body.”— * “ Neither give heed to fables and
 “ endless genealogies, which minister questions,
 “ rather than godly edifying which is in faith.”—
 † “ But avoid foolish questions and genealogies,
 “ and contentions, and strivings about the Law ;
 “ for they are unprofitable and vain. A man
 “ that is an heretic, after the first and second
 “ admonition, reject.” And, says the apostle
 John, † “ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try
 “ the spirits, whether they are of God : Because
 “ many false prophets are gone out into the
 “ world. Hereby know ye the spirit of God :
 “ Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is
 “ come in the flesh, is of God. And every spirit
 “ that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in
 “ the flesh, is not of God : And this is that spirit
 “ of Antichrist, whereof you have heard, that it
 “ should come, and even now already is it in the
 “ world.” || How apposite and striking are these
 passages, and how descriptive of the Gnostic here-
 sies, whilst at the same time they lay in proper anti-
 dotes, both against the impositions of Judaizing
 teachers, and the artifices of Pagan philosophers ?

The apostolic and primitive fathers of the Church
 followed their illustrious leaders with zeal and for-
 titude, and stood forth eminent champions for the
 Christian Faith.

Need I mention the ** holy HERMAS, who wrote

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* 1 Tim. i. 4.

† Tit. iii. 9, 10.

‡ 1 John iv. 1, 2, 3.

|| Vid. also 1 Cor. iii. 11, 12.

** With respect to Hermas, I follow Dupin, not Mo-
 sheim, though, I confess, with some hesitation. My own opinion
 is, That *Hermas* cotemporary and companion of St. Paul, and
 who is mentioned by him in Rom. xvi. 14, was the author
 of some pieces now lost : That another Hermas, who lived in
 the second century, and was a brother of *Pius* bishop of
 Rome,

a treatise entitled, *The Pastor*, which was in high esteem among the ancients? Next to him is *Clement* bishop of Rome, a man of great reputation, who wrote two epistles to the Corinthians in the Greek language. Among the Christian doctors who had personally conversed with the Apostles and their disciples, we may also name Ignatius bishop of Antioch. Several epistles still extant are attributed to him, though several doubts have been entertained, concerning the authenticity of some of them. This venerable father was familiarly acquainted with our Lord's disciples; * and such was his distinguished piety and zeal, that he was marked out a victim in the reign of the emperor *Trajan*, by whose order he was exposed to the fury of wild beasts in the public theatre at Rome. *Polycarp* bishop of Smyrna, was a disciple of St. John, a man of eminent sanctity. He is generally allowed to be the author of an epistle to the Philippians. His age was lengthened out till about the middle of the second century, when he suffered martyrdom with constancy and triumph.

St. Justin was the son of Priscus Bachius, a Greek by birth and religion. He was greatly distinguished both for his learning and piety. When he became a Christian, he still continued his profession of philosophy, and wore the habit, converting his talents and accomplishments into the channel of true religion. He composed two admirable apologies for the Christians when under persecution, about the year 150, and presented the first to the

Rome, published some things which are still extant: He being a visionary writer, advanced certain notions agreeable to many at that time; and his admirers ascribed this man's productions to the true or apostolic *Hermas*, with a view to give them the greater dignity and authority.

* Tillemont's *memoires*, pour servir à l'histoire de l'église, tom. 2. p. 42.

the emperor Antoninus Pius, and the other to his successor in the empire, Marcus Antoninus the philosopher. He himself at last suffered as a martyr, in the glorious cause of Christianity. Besides his apologies, he has left behind him an excellent dialogue with Tryphon the Jew, in which he endeavours to refute the infidelity of the Jews, and to prove, from their own Scriptures of the Old Testament, the truth and certainty of the Christian Religion.

Papias bishop of Hierapolis, and disciple to John the Evangelist, published an historical performance, a few fragments of which only remain. He was among the first who advanced the notion of a Millennium, being of opinion that, prior to the general dissolution of the world, Jesus Christ was to appear on earth, and there to reign with his saints in great glory, for the space of a thousand years. The Millenarians build their doctrine on several passages in Scripture, particularly Rev. ch. xx. and it gained ground during the three first centuries, Quadratus a Roman senator, and Aristides an Athenian philosopher, wrote and presented apologies for the Christians, to the emperor Adrian; but they are unfortunately lost. Hegesippus published an ecclesiastical history, from the Apostles days to his own time, about the year 180, which has likewise perished, and nothing of it remains except some specimens preserved by Eusebius.

Irenæus bishop of Lyons, was by birth a Greek, but had the happiness to be from his infancy a disciple of St Polycarp. He was zealous in rectifying the mistakes of some of the primitive Christians, and studious to stop the progress of error. He therefore composed five books against heresies. The Greek original is lost, but there remains an ancient Latin translation of them, deservedly esteemed

steemed a precious monument of antiquity. During the cruel persecution raised under the reign of Severus, when vast numbers of Christians were barbarously used, he also died a martyr, about the year of Christ 203.

Tatian a disciple of St. Justin, wrote a discourse against the Gentiles. *Athenagoras* an Athenian philosopher published an apology for the Christians, in the time of Marcus Aurelius, also an admirable treatise upon the resurrection. *Theophilus* bishop of Antioch, is author of three books in defence of Christianity. *Clemens*, the disciple of *Pantæus* at Alexandria, was a man of profound erudition. He flourished in the reigns of *Severus* and *Caracalla*, till about A. D. 220. He composed a variety of treatises, of which there are only three that have escaped the shipwreck of time. These are his *Stromata*, *Pedagogue*, and *Exhortation*. The first is of a miscellaneous nature, the second contains a system of morality, and the last is an address to the Gentiles, with a view to convert them from Paganism to the Christian Faith.

Tertullian was one of the Latin fathers, a man of genius and learning, but of warm imagination, and austere in his notions. This made him adopt the conceits of *Montanus*, whilst he himself wrote against other heretics. He was of the city of *Carthage*, and his father was proconsul in Africa. Favoured with a liberal education, possessing good natural talents, and zealous in the cause of religion, he exerted himself in writing a great many books, in which however there is a mixture of good and bad as to certain sentiments, whilst all admire his imagination and eloquence.

Cyprian, another Latin writer, was bishop of *Carthage*. He succeeded *Donatus* in the year 248, and during the persecution under *Decius*, he was
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beheaded in the year 258. He held several councils upon the affairs of the church, was deeply engaged in a controversy about the baptism of heretics, and published a great variety of letters, as also treatises on several subjects, which breathe a high spirit of devotion, and some of them are master-pieces of learning and eloquence.

I might also mention *Minucius Felix*, Arnobius the African, and Dionysius bishop of Alexandria, the small remains of whose writings prove specimens of their capacity, knowledge, and taste.

Origen is justly celebrated as a person of distinguished abilities, of extensive learning, and of wonderful industry. His numerous and laborious works, which are to this time preserved, attract our admiration, though it must be owned, he was too much enamoured with the charms of the Platonic philosophy. This tinctures many of his writings: his disciples drank deep of this fountain; and they, overleaping the boundaries which their master had observed, ran extravagant lengths, and introduced the scholastic divinity. Thus, instead of contemplating Christianity in its native excellence and simplicity, philosophy and subtle metaphysics were conjoined with it, and a wide door was flung open for the mere deductions of reason, and the inventions of fertile imagination.

I would now observe, though in a transient manner, that besides the rapid progress of the gospel during the first century, the limits of the Christian Church were greatly enlarged in the second and third centuries. Notwithstanding the various persecutions raised against the Christians, yet there were considerable intervals of time between some of them, which proved a breathing period, and allowed the church to revive its spirits, and recover its strength. Some of the Roman
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man emperors, particularly Trajan and the Antonines, were naturally humane, and the execution of their edicts against the Christians was partly relaxed, and sometimes suspended. The zeal and faith of the primitive professors of the gospel made them surmount all difficulties, and divine providence remarkably prospered that heavenly religion which was planted by the Son of God. * Ecclesiastical History informs us, that now the glorious light of the gospel was spread almost throughout the whole East, in Armenia, Persia, and India; as also among the Germans, the Spaniards, the Celts, the Brittons, and many other nations in different parts of the world, particularly the Dacians, Scythians, and Getulians. Churches multiplied to a great degree in Europe, particularly in Gaul, and it is thought by some that Scotland was converted to the Christian faith in the third century. The pious labours of the primitive fathers very much contributed to propagate Christianity, but in a principal manner, their care to disperse abroad various, especially Greek and Latin translations of the Holy Bible. That which bore the name of the Italic was generally preferred, and was followed by the Syriac, Ethiopic, and Egyptian versions.

It may not perhaps be improper to remark, that about the middle of the second century, the external polity of the Church began to assume a new face. Hitherto the form of ecclesiastical government was extremely simple: Different churches were so many independent societies, generally governed by their own particular bishops or presbyters. When these multiplied, and grew to importance and stability, they conceived more extensive views, and opened a friendly correspondence among themselves, in order to promote the general inter-

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rests

* Tertullian, Adv. Judæos, cap. 7, p. 212.

rests of the common cause. They judged it proper to assemble together in a solemn manner, in certain places, and at stated times. The several churches of a province associated together, and formed one great ecclesiastical body. The confederacy of independent states in Greece might suggest this measure as proper, and a variety of circumstances did afterwards concur to fix the continuance of them as expedient. These assemblies of deputies from different churches, were called among the Greeks, *synods*, and by the Latins, *councils*. The laws which were enacted at these general meetings, either provincial or national, were of general obligation, and obtained the title of *Canons*, or ecclesiastical rules. Afterwards, general councils, called *Æcumenical*, were sometimes convened upon important occasions. These were composed of delegates from churches in different kingdoms and countries, and met under the sanction of their respective sovereigns. This, however, gave rise to that ecclesiastical power and pre-eminence usurped by the Prelatical order. In process of time, Metropolitans and Patriarchs were instituted; and at last the Bishop of Rome was declared Prince of the Patriarchs, and invested with a spiritual supremacy, whilst the councils extended their powers and privileges, and regulated for the whole church, the standards of faith, manners, and polity. About this time also the clergy began to propagate the opinion, that the Christian priesthood was come in room of the Jewish, which was abolished, and that therefore they were entitled to the like honours, immunities, and advantages *. This notion gradually gained ground, especially after the second destruction of Jerusalem, and proved in time, a fruitful source

* Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. Eng. vol. I. p. 146.

source of opulence and dignity to the sacerdotal order.

But we must now divert a little to a different object, and survey some scenes of a moving, but interesting nature.

During the three first centuries, Christianity was not only unsupported by the civil powers, but made its way and spread through the world in opposition to them. This, however, was effected, not by intrigue or stratagem, not by working on the superstition of a credulous multitude, nor by any methods of violence, but by the gentle arts of persuasion, by addressing the reason and ingenuity of mankind, by displaying before the eyes of the world the native excellency of the gospel, and through a divine power and blessing accompanying it. The primitive Christians were inspired with a sublime and lively faith, with ardent zeal, and heroic fortitude, and this rendered them superior to trials and temptations, and to all the storms and tempests of persecution which were raised against them.

Even Jesus Christ himself, the great founder of our faith, the Son of God, and Saviour of mankind, was persecuted and put to death by a deceived and malicious world. The exalted sanctity, and unblemished integrity of his followers, could not preserve them from sharing the same fate. Great numbers of them fell a sacrifice to the rage and cruelty of barbarous and tyrannical men. The Jews, to whom the gospel was first preached, moved with envy, instigated by malice and infidelity, raised a violent persecution against the Christians. They stoned to death *Stephen* the first illustrious martyr, they cut off with the sword *James* the son of *Zebedee*, also *James* the just, bishop of *Jerusalem*, and, with hostile intent, they gave commission to many, to go into strange cities, and to distant
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provinces, in order to apprehend and punish, or bring bound to Jerusalem all who believed in the name of the Lord Jesus.—The enmity of the heathen nations against the Christian religion was no ways inferior, and they were armed with more extensive powers. It is commonly reckoned that the Christians sustained the shock of ten persecutions under the Roman emperors, from the time of Nero in the year 64, to that under Dioclesian, *A. D.* 303, inclusive.

Nero was the first emperor who issued edicts and enacted laws against the Christians, in which he was followed by several succeeding princes. He was a wicked and lawless tyrant, and delighted so much in cruelty, that he wished the Roman people had but one head, that he might cut it off at one stroke. He himself was suspected of setting fire to Rome, and he was so base as to throw the odium of it upon the innocent Christians. They suffered every species of misery, during the remainder of his reign, which continued till the year 68. Some of them were wrapt up in garments of combustible materials, which were set on fire; others were crucified, or exposed as public spectacles to the dreadful fury of wild beasts. Among the rest, it is generally believed that St. Paul and St. Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome, sealing with their blood that divine religion, which with zeal and intrepidity they had preached and propagated in the world.

The Christians enjoyed an interval of rest, during the civil wars betwixt Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, and under the reigns of Vespasian and Titus.

But, about the year 94, the flames of persecution broke out a-new, under Domitian, who resembled Nero in all kinds of vice. Flavius Clemens, a person of consular dignity, and Flavia Domitilla, a lady nearly related to him, were cut off by martyrdom;

tyrdom; and the holy Apostle John was then banished to the isle of Patmos, where he penned that mysterious book the Apocalypse. Tertullian says, that this venerable man was, sometime prior to this, thrown into a vessel of boiling oil, but that he was miraculously preserved, and came out unhurt. }

Though Trajan was a prince possessed of many amiable qualities, yet did the Christians suffer very considerably during his reign. He indeed wrote to Pliny the younger *, Proconsul in Bithynia, and gave orders, that the Christians should not be officiously sought after; at same time, he allowed them to be put to death, if accused and convicted of adhering pertinaciously to their religion.

Ignatius bishop of Antioch, was condemned by the emperor himself, in the year 107; and the aged, venerable Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, was put to the torture and crucified, when he was 120 years old. The persecution continued in the reign of Adrian, and was carried on, particularly in Asia, with unusual violence. Serenus Granianus the Proconsul, a man of a just and humane character, represented to the emperor the impropriety of such barbarous proceedings against a set of men, who were good and useful subjects, and who were chargeable with no crime. Quadratus and Aristides presented apologies in favour of the Christians. The result was, that the emperor issued an edict, prohibiting for the future, that any Christians should be put to death, except convicted of rebelling against the laws, allowing them the privilege of being tried in a fair judicial form, and ordaining that their false accusers should be punished. This produced a happy effect favourable to the Church.

Antoninus Pius appears to have been well disposed towards the Christians. Yet they were still exposed, in certain places of the empire, to the cruelty of

* Plin, Epist, lib. 10. Ep. 97, 98.

of a superstitious populace, and to the malice of Pagan priests. This produced an admirable apology, drawn by Justin Martyr, which he presented to the emperor. In consequence of this, and rather judging favourably of the Christian religion, he published an imperial edict, denouncing capital punishment on any who should falsely accuse the Christians. The conclusion of it runs thus,—
*—If any shall, for the time to come, molest the Christians, and falsely accuse them on account of their religion, let the person thus accused be acquitted, though it should appear that he is a Christian, and let the accuser be punished with rigour of law.

Marcus Aurelius, who succeeded to the empire, did for some time look with an auspicious eye upon the Christians. Afterwards, misled by the bad advice of designing courtiers, urged on by the misrepresentations of heathen magistrates, and the solicitations of superstitious people, he gave up this valuable body of men, to be harrassed by their implacable enemies. They did not fail to exercise the most despotic tyranny, but treated such who bore the Christian name in a very injurious and merciless manner. The excellent apologies drawn in their behalf by Athenagoras, Tatian, and Justin Martyr, did not produce at this time the desired effect, † so that great numbers fell a sacrifice, and among others, Justin Martyr himself, and the holy Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, as also Pothinus bishop of Lyons. Such proceedings, which breathe so high a spirit of injustice and inhumanity, must stain the character, and tarnish the administration of Marcus Aurelius, however celebrated by some for personal virtue and wisdom in other respects.

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* Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 4. cap. 13.

† Fox's Martyrology, vol. 1.

In the reign of Commodus, the Christian Church enjoyed some respite, but a cruel persecution arose under Severus about the year 200. This emperor published an edict in the 10th year of his reign, strictly prohibiting, under the severest penalties, all persons whatever to become Jews or Christians. This furnished a pretext for persecuting the latter in a particular manner. This was accordingly done through most countries of Europe, and with signal violence in Africa. Many persons of great rank and eminence, were brought from Egypt and other places to Alexandria, where they suffered nobly in the cause of Christianity. In Gaul, Irenæus was put to death at Lyons; and there was besides, a general massacre of all the Christians in that city, so that the blood of holy Martyrs was to be seen flowing on all sides.

When Maximinus rose to the empire, he soon discovered himself unfavourable to the Church. He first began his opposition by publishing edicts against the bishops and priests, but soon thereafter the whole body of believers was persecuted. This continued for three years, during which time, several Christian temples were demolished, that had been erected in the time of Alexander Severus.

In the year 249, Decius Trajan ascended the imperial throne. He soon set on foot a dreadful persecution against the church of Christ. By bloody edicts he commanded the Prætors and Proconsuls, upon pain of death, to do every thing in their power to extirpate the Christian religion, and to compel those who had embraced it to return to idolatry. It is not easy to conceive the consternation which would seize the Christians, upon so alarming a prospect. They were attacked in every quarter with savage and unrelenting fury. From Rome the persecution passed into all the provinces
of

of the empire, particularly Asia, and Egypt. Great multitudes suffered the most infernal torments, which ingenious cruelty could invent, and with invincible fortitude, and by triumphant faith rose in a glorious manner superior to them. But at same time, there were too many, who, struck with terror at the prospect of those horrible tortures which were preparing for them, made shipwreck of their profession, and fell into apostacy. Some of them were fatally prevailed on, to offer sacrifice, and burn incense before the images of heathen deities, or to procure certificates from the Pagan priests of their having done so. This lamentable defection among so many Christians, was the occasion of much disturbance and warm contests some time thereafter: When peaceable times returned, these apostates were desirous of returning into the communion of the Church; but the terms of their admission were not easy to be adjusted. Whilst some were disposed to shew an excess of indulgence and to stretch to the utmost the point of charity, others held out with inflexible severity, and insisted on all the rigour of ecclesiastical discipline.

Under *Gallus* and *Volusianus*, the persecution against the Christians did not cease. Some were exiled from their native country, and suffered extreme hardships, whilst others were cruelly condemned to death. At same time they were involved in the common calamity of a dreadful pestilence, which then broke out and raged with violence through many provinces of the Roman empire.

When *Valerian* mounted the throne, he looked with a smiling aspect upon the Church, for a few years, he even proved a patron of the Christians, and treated them with kindness and friendship. * He did

* Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 7, cap. 9.

did them good offices on a variety of occasions, they had free access to his person, found a sanctuary under his protection, and his court appeared like a little Christian Church. But this promising scene soon vanished; a dismal day of gloom and terror quickly succeeded a morning of joy and sun-shine. The Emperor was unhappily seduced by Macrinus, a magician of Egypt, who wrought himself into high favour, and directed all the councils at Rome. He took every method to persuade *Valerian*, that the only way to procure prosperity for the empire, was to re-establish Gentile idolatry in its full extent, and totally to suppress Christianity. Upon this, bloody edicts were issued out, about the year 257, not only prohibiting all Christian assemblies, but ordering bishops, priests, and deacons to be put to death, and that magistrates making profession of the Gospel should share the same fate. At last the persecution became general, so that neither rank, nor sex, nor age could prove a protection from those sanguinary laws which were now enacted. Cyprian, in an elegant and pathetic manner, bewails those fearful sufferings which the Christians then underwent, and he himself was beheaded at Carthage, whilst Xistus, bishop of Rome, fell a victim there. And at one time, there were no less than three hundred martyrs, who rather than offer sacrifice to heathen gods, and renounce Christ, leaped into a horrible pit of burning lime, which had been on purpose kindled for the tragical occasion, and were scorched and stifled, and at last consumed in the flames. As if divine Providence meant to punish in an exemplary manner the wicked persecutor, the northern nations, a fierce and warlike people, did then begin to make irruptions into the empire, and sometime after, *Valerian* himself was made prisoner by *Sapor* king of Persia.

sia. He was then subjected to every possible hardship, and treated in the most ignominious manner, as if a slave, and not an emperor. The monarch of Persia made him basely stoop, and set his foot upon him when he mounted on horseback. He kept him for some years a miserable captive, at last caused him to be skinned alive, and rubbed with salt. Thus perished the Roman emperor, after having been guilty of a thousand barbarities against the innocent Christians !

In several successive reigns, under Gallienus, Claudius, Probus, Carus, and Numerian, the Church of Christ enjoyed a long lucid interval. This continued with very little interruption almost 42 years. At last a dreadful storm arose, big with terror and trembling, which seemed to threaten the entire destruction of the Christian name.

Dioclesian was declared emperor in the year 284, and he assumed into a share of the government *Maximinus Herculeus* in the year 286. As these two emperors were disturbed with frequent revolts of their subjects in different provinces, they thought proper to elect *Constantius Chlorus*, and *Maximinus Galerius*, whom they honoured with the name of Cæsars, whilst they themselves retained that of Augustus, as colleagues in the empire and superior to them. *Dioclesian* did not at first betray any innate aversion to the Christians. But urged by the restless importunity of *Galerius* his own son-in-law, and too credulous of the misrepresentations given of the Christians as accessory to setting on fire the imperial palace in *Nicomedia*, and as engaged in some seditions which had happened in *Armenia* and *Syria* ; yet, though in fact these were malicious aspersions, he at last published the most terrible edicts against the Christians. He first attacked the ministers of Religion. He next degraded

degraded persons of illustrious extraction, or of eminent station, and ordered them to be branded with a mark of infamy, if they would not abjure Christianity. He afterwards proceeded to the highest pitch of barbarity, sparing none of whatever denomination or character. Multitudes were thrown into prison, others were banished, and had their estates confiscated, many were scourged to death, were torn in pieces by lions and tygers, were burnt, beheaded and crucified, whilst some were doomed to a more lingering death, being roasted at a gentle fire, or having melted lead poured into their bowels. * I might mention the tragical story of the Thebean legion wholly consisting of Christians, who are said, first to have been decimated, and afterwards entirely destroyed, by order of Maximinus Galerius. This, it is said, they calmly submitted to, with their swords in their hands, rather than renounce Christ, and swear by the altars of heathen deities. But the fact, though asserted by some, is disputed by others. † In Phrygia, a whole city composed of Christian inhabitants, was consumed by fire, the questor, magistrates, and all the people, men, women, and children. Eusebius himself lived at that time, and was an eye-witness to the most shocking scenes of barbarity and blood, which the Christians however nobly underwent, with a triumph of faith and fortitude, which reflected the highest honour upon themselves, gave a lustre and dignity to their religion, and bespoke the remarkable presence and support of the Almighty.

Of all the horrid persecutions raised against the Christians, this under Dioclesian may be justly }
reckoned

* Euseb. hist. Eccles. lib. 8. cap. 9.

† — lib. 8. cap. 13.

reckoned the most severe and formidable. It raged for ten long years, and even reached to Great Britain. * The most ancient British historian says, That the Churches were demolished, that all the books of holy Scripture wherever they could be found, were burnt, and that great numbers both of the priests and people, were slaughtered as sheep.

Monsieur Godeau affirms, that in this persecution, there were sometimes no less than 17,000 martyrs killed in the space of one month. And he reckons, that during the continuance of it, there were in the province of Egypt 144,000 persons who died by the violence of their inhuman persecutors, besides 700,000 more, most of whom perished by a premature death, through the hardships of banishment, and by being condemned as slaves to the public works.

These are mournful, tragical scenes, which cannot fail to excite in the mind, the strongest sentiments of compassion and wonder. We sympathize with the suffering martyr, although we know, that he is just now shining in robes of glory and immortality: We are shocked at the brutality of savage men, who could so often embroe their hands in the blood of their brethren. Perhaps we wonder at the permissions of Providence, which could so long tolerate such scenes of cruelty and confusion, and that the justice of Heaven did not appear armed with thunderbolts of vengeance, against the unrelenting enemies of God and goodness †. But let us not dare, rashly to arraign the plans or procedures of Providence, which always steers an invariable course of wisdom and rectitude, even amidst all the clouds and hurricanes
which

* Gildas, de excidio Britanniae.

† Vid. Rev. vi. 9, 10, 11.

which may infest our lower world. Let us admire the energy of that Divine Religion, which could inspire its votaries with such heroic magnanimity, as to make them despise death in its most frightful forms, smile at the sight and force of flames, * and croud with holy haste to the tribunals of Pagan judges, there to avow their fidelity to their God and Saviour, and court the crown of Martyrdom. Let us mark with wonder those gracious and astonishing assistances so frequently vouchsafed to the saints, and confessors, and martyrs in primitive times, by which they were enabled, in so striking a manner to seal and confirm the truth of Christianity. And let us admire the miraculous preservation of the Church of Christ, amidst those perilous times, so full of danger, difficulty, and distress, till it rises superior to all opposition, and becomes most gloriously triumphant. For true it is, that the blood of the martyrs has been the seed of the Church, and contributed, by the blessing of the Almighty, to spread the conquests of the Gospel far and near through the world. And persecution, however awful, and though wholly unjustifiable, has yet proved the means of releasing the prisoners of hope, from their captivity in mortal flesh, and of waiving in an earlier period and by a speedier flight, an immense multitude of immortal souls, from these dusky and tempestuous regions here below, to the serene shores of everlasting rest and joy in heaven.

The unblemished integrity, the exalted sanctity of the primitive martyrs, the devotion of their dying moments, and the dignity with which they suffered, made a deep impression upon the minds of men. This served to call in attention, to command veneration, to excite enquiry, and at last to persuade

* Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 8. cap. 12.

persuade the world, that such dreadful evils would not be calmly endured by the Christians, without a serious conviction of their acting a wise and worthy part, that such invincible patience could not be displayed without Divine assistance, and that truth behoved to be the foundation of the whole. They saw, not a few, but vast multitudes of every rank, and age, and sex, in various kingdoms and provinces, united in one faith, resolute in their profession, resigning all the advantages of life, and falling a chearful sacrifice to death, rather than renounce that religion which they had embraced. They thereupon concluded that it must be Divine, and that it was well and firmly founded, * when instead of being shattered by persecutions and injuries, it rather increased, and became more stable and respectable. For the Gospel, from the time of its first publication, was always gaining ground, and multiplied its trophies in a surprising manner. In the very first century, Christian churches were established in most of the provinces of Italy, Egypt, the East, and Africa. In the second, there were many founded in Asia, and Gaul. And the number of Christians grew so prodigiously in the third century, that almost one half of the Roman empire had gone over to the Christian Faith.

In one view, it may indeed seem strange, how it came to pass, that the Christian Religion was persecuted with so much rancour and cruelty, especially as the Romans gave a toleration to the nations whom they conquered, to retain their religious opinions and usages. Considering the innocence and benevolence of Christians, not only the inoffensive simplicity of their lives, but the agreeable aspect of their profession upon civil government,

* Lactant. de justitia, lib. 5. cap. 13.

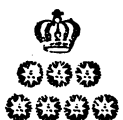
vernment, and how admirably conducive their Religion was, to promote the happiness of individuals, and the general welfare of human society, one would be apt to imagine that Christianity would have met with a less unfavourable fate, yea, even with an honourable reception in the world. But in making an estimate of human affairs, we must always make large allowances for the passions, the prejudices, and interests of mankind. These will often warp them aside, both from the principles of reason, and the path of duty. Besides, it must be remembred, that Christianity stood directly opposite to all the false religions of the heathen world, strongly condemned their idolatry, and all their superstitious ceremonies, prohibited some of their most favourite passions and practices, and enjoined a belief of its own doctrines, and a compliance with its laws, under the sanction of most awful penalties. All this ran counter to the corruption of human nature, and the prevailing wickedness of the world. Innovations in religion are generally disliked, and a reformation is too frequently opposed. The Christians were bound by their principles, not merely to exercise their Religion in private, but to spread and propagate it through the world, to point out the impiety of Paganism, and the absurdities of Heathen worship, to make proselytes, and plant churches wherever they could. This excited a groupe of inveterate passions, envy, suspicion, malice, resentment. Among all the Heathen nations, one may venture to say, there was a kind of community of religion. All was founded on the same false, delusive principles, though diversified by some particular modes or circumstances. All were ignorant of the true God, and of the only Mediator between God and man, and all worshipped idol-
vanities,

vanities, the fictions of their own imaginations, or the devices of their own hands. Hence it was, that the Romans found no great difficulty in introducing into the provinces they conquered some of their native gods; neither were they scrupulous of receiving from them some ceremonies of superstition, which appeared with an air of novelty and grandeur.

But the Christian Religion stood single and alone. It attacked the idol-worship of the Jews, and the idolatry of the Gentiles; it directed its efforts against the established religion of the empire. The Romans beheld the increasing numbers of Christians with jealousy, and might suspect that so numerous and so respectable a body, would not only overturn the old, and substitute a new religion, but usurp the reins of government into their hands.

Designing or malicious men were not wanting to augment such fears, and to cherish the seeds of suspicion and prejudice against the Christians. Artful insinuations, groundless aspersions were thrown out against them, as enemies to Cæsar, as engaged in civil commotions, as devoid of all religion, because of the unadorned simplicity of their worship, which had nothing external or glaring, to attract the eye. Heathen philosophers sought to display their wit and learning against a system, which pretended to be much more sublime than any they had taught. The whole tribe of Pagan priests and augurs rose as one man to oppose the progress of the Gospel. The credit of their profession and of their religion began to totter. The craft of many who ministered to the Heathen temples was in danger. And the unthinking, undiscerning multitude, would join in a popular cry, against those men, who insulted,

as they would say, the gods of their country, and the usages of their ancestors, and would prescribe to them unheard-of objects and methods of worship.—Thus persecution arose and was fomented, till Divine truth, and invincible patience, prevailed and triumphed.





P A R T II.

WE now arrive at a more serene and shining period of the Christian Church, under the auspicious reign of CONSTANTINE the Great, the first Christian Emperor.

The learned Spankeim reckons that he was born at Naissa, on the 27th of February, *A. D.* 272.

He was son of Constantius Chlorus, who favoured the Christians more than any of his colleagues in the empire. His father died in England the 25th of July, 306, by whose will he succeeded as emperor in the West. He resided the first six years of his reign in Gaul ; afterwards, being informed of the intolerable outrages committed by *Maxentius*, son of Maximianus Hercules, who was made emperor at Rome, and being solicited by an embassy from the Senate and people, he formed a resolution to deliver the city from the tyranny of that usurper.

When he engaged in this arduous undertaking, he began to meditate of some assistance beyond the mere strength and courage of his army. He resolved therefore to lay aside the vulgar deities, and the rites of Heathenish superstition. He came to a determination of adhering stedfastly to the one only and true God, whom his father had acknowledged, and which disposed him to protect the
Christians,

Christians, even in his own palace. In this noble design he was greatly encouraged by his pious mother Helena, who was assiduous to infuse into him sentiments favourable to Religion.

To this one God he addressed himself in a devout manner, earnestly intreating that he would be pleased to make himself known to him. Heaven graciously heard his prayer, and answered it in a miraculous manner. * Eusebius, who relates the affair, owns it would have been incredible, if he had not heard it from the mouth of Constantine himself, who confirmed it with an oath.

When the army was upon a march, and the emperor wrapt up in profound thought, there appeared, just as the sun was declining, a pillar of light in the heavens, in the figure of a cross, with this inscription visible upon it, *τοῦτω νικά*,—by this overcome. † The emperor and whole army were struck with amazement at the sight of so extraordinary a phenomenon. At night Christ appeared to him in a dream, with the cross in his hand, which made an indelible impression upon his mind: And from that time forward, Constantine the Great, always carried *a cross*, as the imperial standard before him, in all his wars, which Eusebius frequently saw.

Constantine, now advanced with a noble intrepidity to the very walls of Rome, at the head of an army consisting of 90,000 foot, and 8000 horse. He encamped in a spacious plain before the city, and there waited the arrival of Maxentius, who soon appeared with a numerous body of forces, amounting

* Euseb. de vita Constantini, lib. i. cap. 28, &c.

† I am not ignorant that some dispute has been raised about this matter, as to which, *vide* Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. translated by Dr Maclain, vol. i. p. 263, 264.

amounting to 170,000 foot, and 18,000 horse. An engagement commenced, and a fierce and bloody battle was fought with unimaginable ardour. Victory for some time hovered with dubious wings, but at last rested on the side of Constantine. That day he distinguished himself with all the wisdom and valour of an expert warrior, and animated his troops with the most sanguine hopes of success. The army of Maxentius was routed and dispersed: He himself sank into the river when retreating by a bridge of boats laid over the Tyber, which happened to give way by the great numbers which crowded upon it. His body was found, and his head struck off, and carried on a pole before the conquering army. Constantine having thus gained a signal and compleat victory, made a glorious triumphant entry into the city of Rome, amidst the loud acclamations of a joyful people, who hailed him as their illustrious deliverer. He there displayed the standard of the Cross, and erected a monument of gratitude to Almighty God *.

Having settled the great affairs of state, Constantine began to declare more openly in favour of the Christians.

The first edict upon record in their behalf, was that

* The Inscription on the Monument is in Capitals as follows:---HOC. SALUTARI. SIGNO. VERACI. FORTITUDINIS. INDICIO. CIVITATEM. NOSTRAM. JUGO. TYRANNI. EREPTAM. LIBERAVI. DENIQUE. ET. SENATUM. ET. POPULUM. RO. LIBERATUM. PRISCO. SPLENDORI. ET. CLARITATI. RESTITUI. ----- Euseb. Hist. Eccles. Lib. 9. cap. 9. Constantine's coins, extant at this day, are stamped with a Cross on the reverse.

that published at Milan, *A. D.* 312, wherein was granted a general toleration to all religions, but more especially to the Christians. Therein the Emperor prohibits any to disturb them in their profession or way of worship; and orders, that all their churches and revenues that had been taken away, should be immediately restored, and that the purchasers or possessors should be repaid out of the treasury.

Licinius however, Constantine's brother-in-law, having got the whole eastern empire under his command, threw off the mask, and raised a hot persecution against the Church. To punish his perfidy and inconstancy, Constantine resolved upon an expedition against him. He fought several bloody battles, in all which Constantine proved victorious; and which way soever the imperial standard of the Cross turned, the enemy fled before it.

At last Licinius retreated to Nicomedia, whither Constantine followed, and besieged him. He was obliged to surrender; and was sent to Thessalonica, where, upon attempting to raise fresh disturbances, he was put to death, *A. D.* 324.

Then it was that the government of the whole Roman empire devolved upon Constantine. He instantly restored tranquillity to the Church, and sent orders and edicts to all the governors of his provinces, to recal the Christians that were banished; to release those who were under confinement; to reinstate such who had been thrust out of their offices and estates, in their former places and possessions. He rescinded all the severe laws and constitutions which stood against them; and as for such who had suffered martyrdom, he commanded their goods and lands to be restored to those who were next in kindred, or, where there were no relations, that

that these should be appropriated to the use of the Church.

He also took care to promote Christians to all public offices of trust, in order the more effectually to secure the observance of his imperial mandates, and to encourage the profession of Christianity.

He issued the strictest orders for the religious observation of the Lord's-day, requiring it to be solemnly set a-part for prayer and public worship, and all holy exercises. He himself, in conjunction with the great officers of state, and the commanders of his army, set an example of public devotion. The Emperor likewise wrote a large pathetic epistle to the provincial governors of the east, wherein, with consummate wisdom and piety, he warmly exhorts all his subjects to embrace the Christian Religion.

Peace and tranquillity being thus restored to the world, Constantine the Great transferred the seat of the empire from Rome to Byzantium in Thracia, which he enlarged and beautified with all the grandeur and magnificence which art could contrive. He commanded, by law, that it should be called New Rome; but, notwithstanding this, it retains the honour of his name, and is called *Constantinople* to this day. This he finished and dedicated *A. D.* 330.

He built many noble churches and oratories, both in city and country, and enriched and dignified the Christian Church with great revenues and distinguished honours. He tried, for a long time, to reclaim the Gentile world by persuasion and patience; he afterwards proceeded to root out idolatry by bolder measures, though still averse to every thing that could be properly construed compulsion or cruelty. With this view, he ordered commissioners,

oners, appointed for that end, every where to open the Pagan temples, to throw up the doors of the revestries, so that the pretended mysteries which were represented as sacred and venerable, and which hitherto none but the priests were allowed to behold, might now be publicly exposed to the eye and derision of the vulgar. The Pagan priests and flamins, finding themselves detected and abandoned, thought proper to submit. With their own hands they brought furth their idols, dragged the images of their gods by ropes into the streets, to be viewed and handled, and laughed at by the people; and the valuable statues of gold and silver were melted down, and coined into money.

Constantine continued zealous in propagating the Gospel of Christ far and near, and concerted the most effectual measures to render it universal. Whilst he endeavoured to repress Gentile superstition, he gave all possible encouragement to the Christians, reposed confidence in them, and with great kindness entertained the Clergy at his own table. Providence smiled upon his religious endeavours. In his time Heathen idolatry was banished out of all the principal cities, and remained only in some country villages, whence, in the Theodosian Code, it is called *Paganism*; and Christianity became the established religion of the empire. Constantine himself spent most of his vacant time in prayer, reading the Scriptures, and other devout exercises. The Emperor, by the Majesty of his example, formed the whole court to an imitation of him.

At last, this religious and magnanimous Prince died *A. D.* 338, in the 64th year of his age, and the 31st of his reign. His death was a signal loss to the Christian Church, and overwhelmed all good men with grief and lamentation *. Eusebius says
of

* Euseb. de Laudibus Constantini, cap. 9.

of this illustrious personage, that, armed with no other breast-plate but that of piety, and carrying no other banner except that of the Cross, he triumphed over all his enemies, and all their idols.

He left behind him three sons, among whom he divided the empire. He assigned to Constantine the eldest, Britain, Spain and Gaul. To Constantius the Second, he bequeathed Mysia, Thrace, the East, and Egypt. And Constans the youngest, obtained Italy, Macedonia, and Greece, with the provinces which bordered on the Euxine sea, and those parts of Africa which were subject to the Roman empire.

Constantine the Great, had, with a careful eye, watched over the education of these three princes : They proved all of them Christians themselves ; and they continued to protect and cherish the religion of Jesus.

The peace and prosperity of the Church, underwent a short, but very dark eclipse, under Julian the Apostate. Though educated a Christian, yet when invested with the purple, he became a most malicious and inveterate enemy to Christianity. He did not indeed publish imperial edicts against the Christians, nor raise, in a direct or open manner, violent persecutions against them, yet he employed every other method that could be devised, to abolish the Gospel, and to restore Paganism. He himself profanely renounced his baptism, drew his pen, and displayed his wit and learning in defence of heathenism, and in opposition to the Christian religion *. He ordered the Pagan temples to be set open ; he built some, and repaired others. He caused alters to be erected to false deities, and he himself did publicly sacrifice upon them, assuming

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* Sozomen's Hist. Eccles. lib. 5. cap. 3. — Cave's Lives of the Fathers.

the title of Pontifex Maximus, and used continual endeavours to introduce the whole train of Gentile rites and ceremonies. He revoked the laws which had been made by Constantine the Great, against Pagan superstition, oppressed the Christians on many various pretexts, and too much encouraged those who distressed them. He allowed all sects whatever, the free exercise of their religion, but showed distinguishing favour to such who professed Paganism, whilst he deprived Christians of public employments and offices, and banished them from his court. He discharged the latter from teaching the sciences and the *Belles Lettres*, with a view to bring them into contempt; stripped the Clergy of those immunities and privileges which had been conferred upon them, whilst he protected the Jews, lavished immense sums among them, and endeavoured to re-establish them in their native land, from mere hatred of the Gospel, and with a design to frustrate the famous prophecies of its illustrious Founder, as we have elsewhere noticed.

Providence was pleased graciously to interpose in behalf of his Church, by assigning to him the short reign of only two years. Advancing with an army into Persia, he was there defeated, and in the action received a mortal wound, of which he died on the 26th of June 363.

Jovian, who was thereupon declared Emperor, restored peace and safety to the Church. The Gospel flourished every where under the reigns of Theodosius, and of his sons, Arcadius and Honorius, whilst Paganism was universally repressed, and was almost entirely destroyed throughout the whole Roman empire.

Christian Emperors, animated with zeal for the welfare and prosperity of the Church, sought every opportunity to load her with honours and riches.

The

The Clergy were allowed free and frequent access to court, and promoted to patriarchial dignity and almost princely power. The Prelates, who rose to the highest pitch of pre-eminence, were the Bishops of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria. When the imperial residence was transferred to Constantinople, that See contended for a distinguished share of ecclesiastical dominion; and the Bishop of Jerusalem was held in high veneration, as that was the great Mother-church, and had been the illustrious seat of Divine Providence. Extensive powers and privileges were annexed to these Sees, proportional distinctions and immunities were distributed among inferior dignitaries, and a general lustre spread over the whole sacerdotal order. They were no longer exposed to the tyranny of persecution, but basked under the sun-shine of imperial favour. To enter into the Church was the sure road to preferment and wealth; and those who were invested with the sacred character, found it no difficult matter to maintain a commanding influence among those over whom they presided. Emperors themselves raised the most magnificent temples, celebrated the dedication of them with all imaginable pomp and solemnity; and adorned these stately edifices with carving and imagery of exquisite workmanship, with many curious pictures and statues, not as objects of worship, but as mere decorations expressive of taste and grandeur. Some of the Christian Churches were erected over the tombs of the Martyrs, whose memories and burial-places were regarded with a kind of superstitious veneration. Pilgrimages were sometimes undertaken to visit the repositories of those pious dead, and to tread the Holy Land so famous in sacred story. And many became so strongly infected with such false notions and ideas of things, as to
imagine

imagine there was something of real value and energy in all this, and brought large quantities of earth from *Palestine* and other places of supposed sanctity, which were sold at enormous prices, as having a secret virtue or an attendant blessing, which gave a security against the stratagems and malice of evil spirits *. A long train of external rites and ceremonies, borrowed from the Greeks and Romans, were, with some variation, introduced into the service of the Church. The ministers of religion too readily adopted a pompous ritual, and a splendour in worship. They themselves affected to appear in rich and embroidered robes, and in a fine variety of vestments appropriated for different offices and services, with mitres, tiaras, and croziers. Solemn processions and lustrations were encouraged, gold and silver vases were multiplied, and external pageantry was substituted in the room of real devotion.

† St Augustin himself complained, that even in his time, the yoke under which the Jews groaned was almost more tolerable than what was imposed upon some Christians. Many might perhaps please themselves with the thought of preserving the essentials of Christianity, and of engaging the Heathens with more facility to embrace it, on account of condescensions made to their ancient usages. But they did not consider, that by such indulgencies and adulterations they spoiled the beautiful simplicity of the Gospel, disfigured her native excellence, and cherished that propensity of corrupt nature to shew and ostentation in religion, so remote from the genius and design of the Gospel. Far less, perhaps, did they dream of the dreadful abuse that would be made of such innovations in process of time,
and

* Augustinus de civitate Dei, lib. 22. cap. 8.

† August. Ep. 119.

and that they were paving the way for the unbounded power and invention of the Roman Pontiffs, and for those new tenets, and that vast multiplicity of rites and ceremonies which Popery established, till Christianity itself was almost overwhelmed, by a huge overgrown system of superstition.

Whilst religion itself was thus allowed to degenerate, it is less surprising, if the lives and manners of Christians likewise declined from the standard of primitive sanctity. Many indeed adorned their Christian profession by unblemished integrity of character, but there were others who became a reproach to it, by their irregular lives. Some of the Clergy, who ought to have shone forth patterns of piety and virtue, were actuated with pride and ambition, and abandoned themselves to luxury and indolence; and multitudes of the laity were but nominal Christians, whilst they were strangers to the power and spirit of the Gospel. Christianity was now become the public established religion, and was no longer exposed to the discriminating tests and trials of persecution; nay, the profession of it proved subservient to secular views and advantages. Profound peace and security prevailed; and true it is, that worldly prosperity ministers too often to vice, abates the relish of religion, and proves prejudicial both to private and public virtue.

Amidst the external tranquillity of the Church, various sects and heresies sprang up within her own bosom. Men of speculation and leisure, who were ambitious of becoming heads of a party, who were of a factious or turbulent disposition, and under the influence of a vain and warm imagination, were too ready to start new notions, to affect a peculiar phraseology, and pretend even to be wise above what is written.

We

We shall but transiently mention a few of the principal heresies that appeared to disturb the Church, within the period we are now considering.

The Donatists were the followers of those errors which are ascribed to Donatus bishop of Carthage. They are said to have maintained an inequality among the Persons of the Trinity, asserting the Father to be above the Son, and the Son above the Holy Ghost, and to have denied the privilege of baptism to all but to their own particular sect.

Thus they refused to acknowledge other Christian churches, or hold any communion with them, and even considered them as excluded from salvation. These schismatics prevailed chiefly in Africa, and there indeed multiplied to such a degree as to have 400 bishops presiding in their churches. Neither were the weapons of their warfare of a merely polemical nature. When the Donatists were deprived of their churches, and when their seditious prelates were sent into banishment, a dreadful confederacy of desperadoes was formed, who went under the name of *Circumcelliones*. These espoused the cause of the Donatists, and over-ran a considerable part of Africa. They committed the most cruel outrages, till they were at last defeated at the battle of Bagnia by Macarius, who had been sent against them by the Emperor Constans, one of the sons of Constantine the Great.

The heresy which created the greatest disturbance in the fourth century was that of the Arians. It is universally agreed, that one Arius, a priest of the church of Alexandria, and a native of Lybia Cyrenaica, was the founder of this sect. He began to publish his errors about the year 318. He maintained that the *λογος*, or the Word, was a creature produced out of nothing, and of a substance different

different from the Father: That Christ, the Son of God, had a beginning, was the first and noblest of all the works of God, but inferior to him in nature and dignity; and that the supreme Being formed the universe by his instrumentality, as an Agent of subordinate rank. Arius was a man of great subtlety and eloquence: He endeavoured to defend his doctrine with great zeal, and he gained a vast number of disciples who warmly espoused it. Among them there were persons eminent both for their rank and learning. For some time the controversy was considered as of smaller moment; but a flame soon ensued: Dissentions and commotions multiplied; the passions of men intermingled with disputes of religion, and rose to a great height. With a view to repress these, two councils were called at Alexandria, where Arius was condemned for heresy, and expelled the communion of the Church. He still continued, however, firm and unshaken, and was indefatigable in propagating his opinions, and that with remarkable success. Constantine the Great was then reigning; and in order to prevent further disturbance, thought proper to convene a council of the bishops of the east and west, named the council of Nice; and which sat at Nice in Bythinia *A. D.* 325.

Arius appeared there in person; was accused and deposed. Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, exerted himself with distinguishing zeal in behalf of the orthodox system. A creed or confession of faith was drawn up and published, framed with a particular view to oppose the Arian heresy, and to set forth in explicit terms those articles of religion which were attacked by it. This is sometimes called the Nicene, at other times the Athanasian Creed.

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This celebrated council may be esteemed the first œcumenical or general one, and consisted of no less than 318 bishops, who assembled together with great state and solemnity.

Some time afterwards, Arius found means to ingratiate himself with the Emperor, and was recalled from banishment about the year 330. The sons of Constantine were differently disposed in this religious controversy. Constantius adhered to the Arian doctrine, whilst his brothers the Emperors in the west, zealously supported the Nicene-creed. This occasioned much tumult and confusion in the Church; and the world then beheld jarring councils summoned together to condemn and counteract each others decrees. At last, under *Theodosius* the Great, the council of Constantinople, which was assembled in the year 381, completed the ruin and disgrace of the Arians, solemnly confirmed the articles and proceedings of the council of Nice, and with great clearness asserted the divinity of the Holy Ghost.

The Arian-heresy gave birth to a variety of inferior sects. Some, in defending that, went extravagant lengths, even beyond their leader; and others, in opposing it, ran into contrary extremes, whilst they invented a number of fanciful hypotheses for a solution of sacred mysteries. So difficult a matter it is to observe a just medium, and to investigate truth both with accuracy and simplicity.

The Photinians are so called from Photinus, a native of Galatia, and bishop of *Sirmium*. He was a disciple of Marcellus bishop of Ancyra, who had been a member in the council of Nice, and who had there warmly contended against the doctrine of Arius. He afterwards published a book against the Arian bishops, titled, the Submission of Jesus Christ; in which he advanced several propositions which

which favoured of Sabellianism. Photinus avowed his opinions with greater boldness, and expressly declared, that the Son, or Word, was not a distinct person from the Father; and that Christ was designed Son of God, only as born of the Virgin Mary; and that the Holy Ghost was merely a divine virtue and operation of Deity. His error was formally condemned in a council held at Antioch in the year 345, and also by another which met at Milan 346. He himself was at last deposed, and died in Galatia about the year 376.

Appollinaris, bishop of Laodicea, was the head of a different sect. He maintained the divinity of our Saviour with such warmth, as at last to deny his humanity. He was of opinion, that Christ was not endued with an intelligent soul, but that the Deity, united with flesh, was the sole intellectual principle in Christ, and performed all the offices of what we denominate reason, or mind in man. Some of this man's followers affirmed that the flesh of Christ was not a real but apparent body; and thus attributed only one nature to our Saviour, even the Divine, from which doctrine many consequential errors flowed. These notions, however, gained ground for some time, but their farther spread was prevented by several imperial edicts, and at last were mostly repressed by the united efforts of learning and orthodoxy, and the authoritative decrees of councils.

I might mention many other inferior sects and schisms, particularly, the Semi-Arians, Priscillianists, Audeans, Collyridians, Antidicomarianites, and Messalians, &c. but we pass them over, and shall notice a few more of greater consequence.

There were three heresies, which, in a special manner, disturbed the tranquillity of the Church in

the fifth century ; these were Pelagianism, Nestorianism, and Eutychianism.

~ Pelagius, the founder of the first, was a native of Britain, and was powerfully supported by Celestius of the kingdom of Ireland. They were both of them Monks, and maintained a considerable degree of reputation at Rome for several years. There they propagated their particular opinions for some time in a private manner. Afterwards, upon the approach of the Goths about the year 410, they thought proper to retire. They first went into Sicily, and next to Africa, where they published their tenets in a more open manner. Cælestius continued for some time at Carthage, till he was condemned in a council which met there. Pelagius passed into Palestine, and obtained patronage and protection from John bishop of Jerusalem. The peculiar opinions taught by these hereticks were such as these : That there is no such thing as original sin : That Adam's guilt did not descend to his posterity : That all mankind are born in the same state of perfection with their great primogenitor : That man may, by the native exertion of his own faculties, be inclined to what is good, and able to perform it, without the direct assistance of Divine grace : And that men may arrive to such a pitch of holiness as to be no more subject to the dominion of sin. These dangerous notions were combated by many of the orthodox persuasion, particularly by St Augustine. At same time they were readily received by not a few ; and by artful evasions and explications, both Pelagius and Cælestius passed uncensured by councils held at *Jerusalem* and *Diospolis*, and were even acquitted by Zosimus bishop of Rome. At last, however, they were condemned by the council of Ephesus, and their tenets

tenets repressed by several successive councils, and by the authority of imperial edicts.

Thereupon, a kind of new sect sprouted from hence, stiled Semi-Pelagians, about the year 430. These endeavoured to modify matters by certain concessions, and acknowledged the necessity of Divine assistances, to make men persevere and advance in goodness ; but they were so indulgent to free-will, and human liberty, as to think that men may of themselves believe, and may chuse and do what is right ; and that thereupon the grace of God seconds their pious endeavours. They rejected the doctrine of predestination and absolute decrees, and asserted that Christ had died for all mankind, and that the degree of grace necessary to salvation was offered to all.

These opinions were greedily embraced by great multitudes. They were indeed warmly defended by some, and as violently attacked by others ; and at last the council of Orange, which was held in the year 529, solemnly condemned the tenets of the Semi-Pelagians. But they have furnished much matter of speculation and controversy to the Church, even to this day, and men distinguished both for learning and piety, have entertained very different sentiments upon some of these points.

Nestorius, who was promoted to the See of Constantinople, gave rise to a sect which was called after his name. It was a capital article with him, to believe, that the Virgin Mary could not be called the mother of God, but of Christ. This opinion he zealously taught himself, and encouraged others to do so. It was a distinction which was looked on as heretical, and as tending to disown the Divinity of Christ. He farther affirmed, there were two persons in Christ, the divine and human, and that they were united only in will and affection.

tion. Nestorius gained, however, many partizans; and his rank and eminency in the Church gave his opinion a stamp of peculiar authority. Yet this very circumstance excited the envy and jealousy of others, particularly of Cyril, bishop of Alexandria: He took upon him to censure Nestorius, and afterwards formed a scheme with the bishop of Rome of assembling a council, which was accordingly held at Alexandria. There Nestorius was anathematized, and degraded from his Episcopal dignity. Nestorius remonstrated against such proceedings as unjust and null, charged his adversaries with Arianism, and held a council in his own palace of fifty bishops, who were but newly arrived, who in their turn excommunicated those who had deposed him, and acted without them, tho' undoubted members. Much trouble and tumult hereupon ensued, till the Emperor was pleased to interpose, and declare that Nestorius was justly deposed. He ordered him to depart to his monastery, appointed a successor in the See of Constantinople, and exhorted all to unity and harmony.

The writings and doctrines of Nestorius were still, however, diffused far and near, particularly in Assyria and Persia. This was owing, in a great measure, to the indefatigable activity of Barsumas, bishop of *Nisibis*. He ingratiated himself with the Persian Monarch, and founded a famous school as a seminary of Nestorian doctors, who were from thence detached into different countries from time to time.

✓ Eutychius gave name to another sect which ran into a different extreme. He was an abbot of a monastery at Constantinople, and taught, that in Christ there was but one nature after the Union, namely, the Incarnate Word, whilst he condemned such who would assert a twofold nature. This opinion

nion likewise made a considerable progress, and occasioned no small disorder and contention. Councils were summoned to take cognizance of the matter, and they at different occasions passed contradictory sentences, according to the sway of party, and the influence of intrigue. *Flavianus*, Patriarch of Constantinople, assembled a council, where Eutychius was excommunicated, and his doctrine condemned, as denying the humanity of Jesus Christ. Upon this, the abbot lodged an appeal to a general council, which was, by order of Theodosius, assembled at Ephesus in the year 449. *Diocorus*, bishop of Alexandria, presided in it, a man of an arrogant and cruel complexion; an inveterate enemy to the bishop of Constantinople, and who secretly favoured the errors of Eutychius. He was hereupon solemnly acquitted by the council, and Flavianus his prosecutor was barbarously scourged, and sent into banishment. Indeed all matters were here carried on with a very high hand, without regard to justice or order, and in a manner peculiarly inconsistent with the character and dignity of an ecclesiastical court, so that the Greeks bestowed on this Ephesian council the epithet of *σύνοδον ληστρικὴν*, or an assembly of robbers.

Upon the death of Theodosius, *Martianus* his successor in the empire, was prevailed on by urgent representations to convene a general council at Chalcedon, which he himself honoured with his imperial presence. In this grand and crowded assembly, consisting of about 600 prelates, Eutychius was condemned, his doctrines were declared heretical, and a confession of faith was drawn up and subscribed, asserting, That in Jesus Christ two natures were united in one person, without confusion or alteration, and that he is consubstantial with God according to his divinity, and with man in
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virtue of his humanity. Many other matters were taken under consideration and determined, particularly with regard to polity and discipline, and the peculiar powers and privileges of certain bishops in the Church, though not without warm opposition, and considerable degrees of jealousy and discontent.

From these and other heresies already in the Church, arose various new sects and subdivisions of sects, particularly the *Monophysites* and *Monothelites*. The former acknowledged there were two natures in Christ, yet that they were so conjoined and constituted as to form but one proper nature. The other, whilst they allowed the two natures to remain distinct, yet maintained that Christ had but one will, which was absorbed in and composed of the Divine. Many councils were called in the sixth and seventh centuries to take cognizance of these and other matters which occurred. Many authors appeared on both sides, to defend and attack the different tenets and opinions which were started from time to time. And these religious contests served to embitter men's spirits, to kindle strife and animosity, and to divert the attention from the practical duties of the Gospel. It must be acknowledged that truth in general is a valuable jewel. Divine truth is of all others most important, and ought to be asserted and propagated with zeal, and guarded with inviolable fidelity. But too many mistook their own imaginations for the revelations of Scripture, and cared for the opinions of human invention, as if they had been the sacred oracles of infallible truth. Philosophical disputes, metaphysical distinctions, and logical terms, were too frequently introduced, and a kind of scholastic divinity came to be in vogue, which rather tended to bewilder and puzzle than to convince or satisfy the
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the mind. Much error, controversy and disturbance would have been happily prevented, had men considered the mighty difference betwixt knowing or believing the existence of things in general, and understanding their physical nature, or the mode and manner of their operation; had they duly reflected on their own imperfection, or on the immensity of an infinite Being; how unable they are perfectly to comprehend their own make and constitution, still less the wonders of nature around them, and least of all, the adorable mysteries of the invisible almighty Creator of the universe.

We who live in these peaceable times, and amidst a kind of unbounded toleration, may perhaps be apt to wonder, how that matters of mere speculation, as some may call them, should have created such great commotions, and required such frequent and powerful interpositions. But we must understand, that in those days they appeared in another point of light, as of real moment, both in themselves and on account of consequences, as connected with the system of religion, or with the fabric and polity of the Church. One man must make allowance for the frame and fashions, and singular notions of his neighbour; and so ought one age carefully to consider the peculiar complexion and circumstances of another. Some matters, minute in themselves, may have been in the course and concatenation of events, of material influence, which yet are unknown to us, and might have escaped the scrutiny and observation of the most faithful and inquisitive historian. Some of these very controversies have been transmitted to us, do still subsist, are treated by Polemical writers with unabating ardour, and have produced considerable ferment in our ecclesiastical courts. Besides, there is a natural connection between Church
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and State. This was remarkably close and intimate in those early ages, before the boundaries of civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction were defined with precision. And when both these respectable bodies interfere at once, as was then frequently the case, their movements must be more apparent, striking, and consequential.

With respect to remarkable authors who flourished in this period, famous for their learning and character, we may with propriety give the first place to Eusebius. He was born in Palestine in the reign of Galienus, and elected bishop of Cæsarea in 314. He was justly esteemed for his great extent of learning, and for the eminent service which he rendered the Church by the performances which he published. The most distinguished of these are his books of the Preparation and Demonstration of the Gospel, and his Ecclesiastical History. He likewise wrote a Treatise against Hierocles, a heathen philosopher, who had impiously compared Apollonius Tyaneus to Jesus Christ.

Here it may not be improper to observe, that this grand impostor appeared in the first century, in the time of the Emperor Domitian. He was born at Tyana, a city of Cappadocia, and died in the reign of *Cocceius Nerva*. Philostratus undertook to write his life in the third century, about 100 years after the death of his hero. In the reign of Dioclesian, Hierocles, an implacable enemy to Christianity, thought proper to write a book against it, which he called *Philaethes*. With a view to cast a slur on the Gospel, and expose it, if possible, to contempt, he there institutes a comparison betwixt Christ and this Apollonius, pretending that the one had wrought miracles as well as the other, and boldly averring that the latter had ascended to heaven, as well as the former. Eusebius refutes
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his book, and the whole of that malicious story in an unanswerable manner. He shews, that *Apollonius* was so far from deserving to be compared with Christ, that he ought not to be reputed a philosopher, and was destitute of every quality that can constitute a good man. He likewise proves, that *Philostratus* who wrote his life, is an author utterly unworthy of any credit, that he contradicts himself at every turn, speaks doubtfully of the miracles which he himself relates, and asserts innumerable things which are absolute fables.

Besides, *Philostratus* not only wrote about a century after *Apollonius* was dead, but this without any memoirs or records to vouch the veracity of his narrative. Not only are Christian writers silent concerning him, but likewise the very best Heathen authors who lived about that time, and long before *Philostratus*, as *Tacitus*, *Sueton*, *Pliny*, *Plutarch*, *Dion Cassius*, and *Celsus*. Indeed the principal motive which induced *Philostratus* to publish so idle a story, was to pay a compliment to *Caracalla* and *Julia*, who were fond of Sophists and Magicians to a pitch of extravagance, and kept their court crowded with them. Nay, *Philostratus* acknowledges, that *Apollonius* was reputed by the Magicians at *Babylon*, and by the Indian *Brachmans*, and the *Gymnosophists* in *Egypt*, a professed Magician, that he was incarcerated by the Emperor *Domitian* for magical arts; and that he had sacrificed to the sun, to *Jupiter*, and other heathen deities. And *Lucian* mentions one *Alexander*, who was well acquainted with the false and pretended feats of the *Tyanean* impostor, and the whole of his infamous history.

We have had occasion already to make mention of *Athanasius*. He was a most zealous defender of the orthodox faith, a violent enemy to the Ari-

ans, and wrote a great many treatises against them. On this account they persecuted him with unrelenting malice; and through their misrepresentations he sometimes suffered very considerably. According to the variations of their power and interest, he himself experienced a vicissitude of good and bad fortune, so that his life was indeed a kind of checquered scene of honour and disgrace. He was promoted to the See of Alexandria, *A. D.* 326, and had his life prolonged to the year 373.

From about 350, till towards the end of the fourth century, flourished four Greek Fathers, Cyril of Jerusalem, Basil, surnamed the Great, Gregory of Nazianzen, and Gregory of Nissa, also one Latin Father St Ambrose, archbishop of Milan. They were all of them famous for their learning and writings, and for their rank and influence in the Church.

We must next take notice of St Chrysostom, patriarch of Constantinople. His high character for a noble and masculine eloquence, corresponds with the etymology of his name, signifying Golden-mouth. He was a prelate of distinguished dignity, of great erudition and of sublime piety. He published a great variety of performances, which make up eleven volumes in folio, that stand forth an illustrious monument of genius and oratory.

Jerome was a monk in Palestine, who was so fond of study and retirement, that though ordained a priest, yet he declined the functions of the sacerdotal office, that he might wholly devote himself to the pursuits of literature. He exhibited many noble specimens of this, in a great variety of publications, which discover great ability and industry. He was a man of warm complexion, and rather of an enthusiastical turn, which tinctures some of his writings, whilst he treated with severity such who differed

differed in their sentiments from him. He was born about the year 340, and died in an advanced age, *A. D.* 420.

St Augustine was born in Numidia under the Emperor Constantius, on the 13th November 354. His mother Monica was a woman of singular piety, and took great care to have her son properly instructed in the principles of Christianity. He was for some time professor of rhetorick at Rome, and afterwards at Milan, where it is thought he was converted, and touched in an extraordinary manner by the sermons of *St Ambrose*. He came to be created bishop of Hippo in Africa, and by his preaching and writing soon acquired a shining reputation. He published a vast number of books on many different subjects, replenished with learning, and which breathe a spirit of exalted piety, and fervent zeal.

Lactantius, another Latin Father, has been by some called the Christian Cicero. He writes on various subjects; and his language is pure, diffusive, and insinuating.

Many other authors appeared in a long train of succession, who are of inferior note and consideration in the republic of learning. Some of them were solely employed in compiling from those who had gone before them, in making translations, and in collecting the flowers of erudition and eloquence which were scattered through their voluminous works. Others who pretended to originality, blended their theological performances with false notions of philosophy, and their morality with sophistical reasonings and inconclusive arguments. They delighted in dark and ambiguous terms of art, in cobweb controversies and distinctions, and in all the jargon of scholastic divinity. And not a few discarded the aids of human literature, went into
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all the fanaticism of the monastic orders, and poured out their incoherent rhapsodies, as if they had been the effusions of rational devotion. Ignorance and superstition prevailed to a melancholy pitch, especially during the two last centuries of our present period. Many of the bishops were incapable of composing their own discourses, and the Clergy in general were sunk in idleness and luxury, and became illiterate to a shameful degree. The vast wealth which had flowed into the Church unfortunately contributed to corrupt its pastors, and to render them averse to the painful pursuits of knowledge, neglectful of the duties of their sacerdotal function, and inattentive to the grand purposes of real religion. In room of this were substituted the worship of images, the invocation of departed saints, the doctrine of purgatory, the meritorious efficacy of good works, when under the direction and disposal of the priests, veneration of relicts, and their powerful energy in healing mental maladies and corporeal diseases. External rites and ceremonies were multiplied to an enormous degree, which threw a dark shade over the amiable simplicity of the Gospel, and served to nourish notions totally inconsistent with its sublime spirit and intention.

The dreadful inundation of the northern nations in the fifth and sixth centuries, the ravages they committed, the settlements they afterwards made, and the scenes of terror and confusion which they spread through the empire, proved very unfavourable to the arts and sciences, and to every rational or religious improvement. True indeed, this barbarous people did at last embrace Christianity; yet all Christendom suffered unspeakably by their formidable and fatal influence. Besides the general calamities which they occasioned, they for a long time

time harassed and persecuted the Christians with singular ferocity, instigated by the remains of Pagan superstition, which was conformable to their own false religion. And when converted to the faith, they carried along with them many of their idolatrous usages, which were too readily adopted by a compliant Clergy, who even became ambitious of imitating them by supernumerary inventions of their own.

Learning was then banished from her public seats where she had been cultivated and honoured, to the cells and cloisters of convents and monasteries. There she met with a sorry reception, amidst the gloom and restrictions of solitary superstition. This was her only sanctuary in those times of universal disorder. Yet it must be acknowledged, that to this retreat we stand indebted for those treasures of ancient literature which are transmitted to us. Those indolent and unpolished Monks, who were incapable of masterly productions of their own, or of stretching their genius in any elaborate efforts, were faithful depositaries of the writings of others, copied them out at their leisure hours for the use of the world, and happily rescued and preserved from the hands of Gothic barbarism, the remains of venerable antiquity, both sacred and profane.

Monastic institutions got an early footing in the Church, and now prevailed in a very extensive manner. Fear of persecution, a love of ease and indolence, a morose and melancholy turn of mind, or bad habit of body, false and fanatical notions of religion, and the superstition of those times, which, viewed with veneration, such who led a monastic life, as endued with celestial accomplishments, and of uncommon sanctity, and the vast overflow of wealth which from all quarters poured in to their
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support,—all this multiplied the number of *Monks* and *Hermits* to an amazing degree.

Under the persecution by *Decius*, Paul the hermit, by some reputed the first of that order, retired into the dismal deserts of Thebais, and there led a solitary, abstemious life, for the space of ninety years. His example was followed by immense multitudes who distinguished themselves by retirement, by bodily mortifications and austerities, and who in former times went by the name of *Ascetics*. Yet this severe and unsociable life, was not uncommon in Egypt, Syria, and India, even before the coming of Christ. The *Essenes* among the Jews affected it, and the Mahometans themselves practise it. * It first began in the eastern countries, where it rose to the highest pitch, as more congenial with the gloomy complexion of the inhabitants, who languish under a scorching sun and glowing atmosphere.

From the east the monastic spirit passed into the west, first into Italy, and next into Gaul, under the sanction of St Martin the famous bishop of Tours. It gradually gained ground in the other countries of Europe, and particularly in Britain, during the sixth century, under the zeal and influence of Congall, a celebrated Abbot. Afterwards, this contagion soon spread into Ireland, Germany, and Switzerland, which were over-run with swarms of Monks, and covered with convents and monastries. Then were to be seen whole troops of people shut up within the walls of a convent, leading a common and regulated life under the direction and authority of their own abbot, sequestered from all the rest of mankind.

St Anthony passes with some as the first who reduced the monastic state into form and order, and proposed

* Lucas's travels, vol. 2, p. 363, 364.

proposed plans of discipline and government. Vast numbers visited him in his solitude, and in imitation of his example, built huts and cottages in the vicinity of this hermit's cell, and thus were the first monasteries erected in Egypt.

St *Hilarion* introduced them into Palestine, and St *Pacomus* farther modelled the monastic life, and united several monasteries into a congregation. He prescribed for them a variety of new regulations, improved their former discipline, and established nunneries hitherto unknown. Upon this, large communities of women took on a vow of virginity, lived recluse from the sight of men, were buried by themselves in superstitious solitude, and received the veil with great solemnity.

The monastic tribes were distributed into various orders, and observed different rules. Some of them borrowed their name from the founder of their particular class or sect, others from that mode of mortification or discipline to which they were peculiarly attached.

All of them were at first composed of laymen, and were subject to the jurisdiction of their provincial bishop. Afterwards they consisted of multitudes of the clerical profession, and this by particular permission of the Emperors themselves. This contributed to increase the credit and reputation of these monastic societies, many immunities and privileges were conferred upon them, they came to be governed by *abbots* of their own, who were invested with a kind of Episcopal power and dignity, and bishops were frequently chosen out of these fanatical fraternities, and exalted to the highest eminency in the Church.

A kind of epidemic passion raged in different countries, for erecting and endowing convents and monasteries, whilst the spirit of genuine Christianity grew

grew cold and languished. Too soon did many of the very monastic order disgrace their pretensions in a scandalous manner, ran into all manner of licentiousness, and sometimes excite even civil disorders and seditions.

Fanaticism was most predominant in the east, whilst profligacy prevailed in the western convents, whose members lived more at large, and were much less bound to the rules of discipline which they professed. Some of these orders embarked deep in secular concerns, ingratiated themselves with princes, got into the secrets of the Cabinet, became a party in political factions, and exerted themselves to promote the power and enlarge the authority of the Roman Pontifs. * The *Benedictines* in particular expressed their zeal and activity in this manner, though very different from the designs of their pious founder, *Benedict* of Nursia. He instituted this religious order in the year 529, which in process of time acquired immense power and riches, rose superior to most other monastic societies, and obtained a commanding sway and influence both in Church and State.

The ecclesiastical order in general were enchanted with a love of dominion and authority, and were attentive to every measure by which these could be promoted. Not only convents, but churches were multiplied to a great degree, as if the mere erection and consecration of these sacred edifices, could stand in the room of real religion, or atone for the want of virtue, and the practice of vice. To give the greater encouragement to this species of religious liberality, with a view to engage the great, the opulent, and ambitious, into a sacred competition of excelling here, a privilege was

* Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. translated into Engl. by Dr Mac-lain, vol. 1, p. 448.

was conferred upon such who built and endowed public places of worship, to nominate the ministers who were to officiate in them. And here we may find the origin of *patronage*, which some imagine commenced so early as in the fourth century, and which has continued in the Church ever since its first appearance, under a variety of forms. }

The unbounded ambition of the prelatical order, already exalted to a kind of princely power, proved prejudicial in the highest degree to the interests of religion, and to the peace and prosperity of the Church. Jealousies, dissensions, personal animosities and civil broils, flowed from this unchristian source, which tore in pieces the contending parties, and at last occasioned a division of the *eastern* and *western* churches.

The bishops of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem came to be distinguished, particularly in the fifth century, with the venerable title of Patriarchs, and were invested with very extensive powers and privileges. Hitherto the Emperors themselves were considered as the supreme head of the Christian hierarchy, and the great legislative power resided in the councils. The Patriarchs, elated with their vast power, opulence, and splendor, began now to affect a kind of independent jurisdiction, and each to assume a lordly supremacy. The two most formidable rivals in this ambitious contest, were the bishops of Rome and Constantinople. The council of Chalcedon held in the year 451, conferred on the latter the same rights and honours which the See of Rome possessed, with the consent of the Emperor himself. This gave additional lustre and dignity to the See of Constantinople, and inflamed the ambition of its Patriarchs. They extended their jurisdiction among the eastern churches, reduced

the bishops under their authority, and made even those of Alexandria and Antioch stoop to their dominion. Not content with this, they encroached upon the provinces more directly subject to the Roman Pontif. He on the other hand opposed these usurpations, and Leo the Great, in a particular manner, exerted himself to check the growing power of this formidable rival. The bishops of Rome contended with superior advantages, both of wealth and power, and those of the prelatical order who were offended at the invasions of the Byzantine Patriarch, had recourse to Rome, where they were kindly cherished and supported. By this accession of aid, and from a concurrence of other causes, the Church of Rome increased its authority, enlarged its empire, and at last obtained a manifest superiority. The declining power of the Emperors, and the confusion and barbarism introduced by the northern nations, favoured such a design, and the Gothic Princes at last upon their conversion, paid court to the Roman Pontifs, whom they beheld with a kind of superstitious veneration, and in order to secure their interest, loaded them with riches and honours.

In the sixth century, Gregory the Great asserted, in the warmest manner, the pre-eminence of the Roman Pontifs, and their supreme authority, even over the Patriarchs of Constantinople. These high pretensions gradually gained ground, and at last prevailed in the west, whilst they met with powerful opposition in the east, except from those who were at variance with the See of Constantinople. Yet it was for a long time that the bishops of Rome had to struggle hard for the supremacy, the grand object of their ambition. They had to encounter many difficulties and violent resistance, both from the chiefs of the ecclesiastical order, and from secular

lar princes. These endeavoured from time to time to repress their aspiring views. The Kings of the northern nations, who had penetrated into the empire, convened councils and enacted laws by their own authority, they sometimes summoned ecclesiastics to their tribunals, and none were raised to the Pontificate without their knowledge and consent. The Popes of Rome had not as yet asserted an absolute prerogative over princes and people. Every event and circumstance was, however, improved in the most artful manner, in order to prepare the world for this arrogant demand, and so as to rivet, by the most effectual methods, the galling yoke of papal tyranny, upon the necks of implicit and pusillanimous men.

The appearance of the famous Mahomet, the new religion which he introduced, the bloody wars which he excited, and the extensive conquests which he made, roused the zeal and emulation of the Roman Pontif, furnished occasions for the more ample exercise of despotic power, and rendered many more humble supplicants to his authority.

The grand Impostor first appeared at Mecca in Arabia, *A. D.* 612. He was of common extraction, and was bred to merchandize by his uncle Abutaleb. But he possessed great natural talents, a persuasive eloquence, and had a soul turned for ambition and enterprize. He was employed for some time as a factor for an opulent widow, and had the management of an immense estate belonging to her. He soon insinuated himself into favour, and obtained her in marriage. By this means he became superior in wealth to most in the city, and his aspiring mind soon conceived the design of possessing the sovereignty. Having maturely weighed in his thoughts all the possible means of effectuating his ambitious project, he saw none
so

so probable as framing that imposture which he published in his Alcoran, with so much mischief to the world. Mahomet, however, found himself involved in great difficulties by residing in Mecca, where he was so well known. He therefore boldly assumed the character of a prophet sent by God, to root out Polytheism and idolatry in the world, to reform the religion of the Arabians, and to amend the Jewish and Christian worship. He engaged a certain number of trusty disciples, and with them retired to Yathreb, now called Medina; about 270 miles from Mecca, about the year 622.

This place he called the city of the Prophet, the whole of which was subject to his sole command and authority. There, with great sophistry, he preached and propagated his false religion for the space of 13 years, and for the remaining 10 years of his life he fought for it, obtained many signal victories, spread the terror of his arms and the delusions of his imposture far and near through the world, and founded the Saracen empire. His successor *Abubeker* made irruptions into Palestine and Syria. Omar, the next Caliph, was a most successful warrior, and extended his conquests with an astonishing rapidity. His reign continued only for about 10 years; and in this short space of time, he subdued all Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, and Egypt*. The Mahometan religion made its progress in the world, not by argument or the gentle arts of persuasion, but by force, menaces, and blood; and Mahomet strictly discharged all disputes or enquiries concerning it. Besides, his Alcoran contained many gross misrepresentations of God, too suitable to vulgar notions; and his law was cunningly adapted to the taste of the eastern nations, and to the corrupt passions of mankind in general.

* Ockley's Hist. of the Saracens, vol. I. p. 243.

general. The circumstances also of time and place did very much favour the spread of Mahometan delusion. The Arabians, in particular, laboured under the grossest ignorance, and were much addicted to superstition. The most lamentable divisions prevailed among the Christians. They were split into numberless sects and parties, and their zeal was exhausted against one another, instead of being directed against the common foe. Thus Africa, which had been delivered from the dominion of the Vandals in 533, by Belisarius that illustrious commander, were subjected to that of the Saracens about the year 647.

The tyrant Phocas, who had waded through blood to the imperial throne, thought proper to oppose the pretensions of the See of Constantinople, and about this time to confer upon the bishops of Rome the title of *Universal Pastor*, or *Oecumenical Patriarch*. This introduced the papal supremacy; and thus did Antichrist fix his foot in the western and eastern parts of the earth, much about the same time, to the dreadful detriment of the Christian world.

The distinguished dignity with which the bishops of Rome were now solemnly invested by the Emperor, highly gratified the aspiring views of the Roman Pontif; and no artifice was left unemploy-
ed for enlarging and establishing it. This, however, alarmed the jealousy of many, and for a considerable time excited violent opposition. Multitudes expressed their suspicion and abhorrence of such lordly power and dominion. The churches of Gaul and Spain, though respectful to the See of Rome, yet insisted on their own authority. Italy itself was far from being obsequious. The bishops of Ravenna were too haughty to submit; and the
Britons

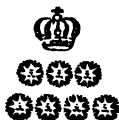
Britons and Scots long maintained a kind of religious liberty.

But ignorance and superstition made a swift progress in the seventh and eighth centuries. The Clergy were at indefatigable pains, to cherish among the vulgar high ideas of their own importance, to court the favour of the great, and to persuade them into a belief that it was a duty to yield an implicit submission to their authority. This was not a difficult undertaking in these dark and superstitious ages. Thereupon the priests modelled the Christian doctrine according to their own imaginations, imposed their novelties and absurd inventions upon an ignorant Laity, and drew from them liberal donations and valuable grants, by which ecclesiastical power was greatly augmented, and the treasury of the Church vastly enriched. The number of convents and monks continued to increase, and in all debates or contests which arose either among themselves or with others, they had constant recourse to the Roman Pontif, as a sovereign umpire, which practice contributed not a little to establish papal usurpation. The whole monkish order was particularly devoted to the See of Rome, fought by all possible means to advance her power and interest, and were wont to represent her bishops as so many demi-gods to the facile and credulous multitude whom they deluded. In return for these favours, convents and monastries were rewarded with peculiar privileges, exempted from the jurisdiction of bishops, and rendered subject only to abbots of their own, who were exalted to a kind of episcopal dignity.

The Clergy in general in the seventh and eighth centuries, were over-run with ignorance, immersed in indolence and superstition, lived in luxury, and were often guilty of the most enormous crimes.

This

This was a fit season for the prince of darkness to stalk abroad ; Antichrist availed himself of the errors and vices of the times ; the Roman Pontif, instead of endeavouring to repress or remove, gave countenance to the growth of superstition and ignorance, and built the vast superstructure of papal power upon the ruins of real religion and genuine Christianity.





P A R T III.

THE third period of ecclesiastical history, will present to our view the Romish hierarchy still more fully established, and the Pope of Rome usurping more extensive power, and ruling with despotic sway, both as a spiritual and secular prince.

I have had occasion to mention the formidable irruptions made into the empire at different times, particularly in the fifth and sixth centuries, by the Goths, Vandals, Lombards, Burgundians, the Huns, Franks, and other barbarous nations. They rushed in amazing multitudes from the northern parts of Germany, from about the Baltic, from Sweden, Denmark, and Tartary, and like a mighty deluge spread devastation wherever they came. These fierce and mighty conquerors dismembered and shared the Roman empire among them. The kings of the Goths were for a considerable time masters of almost all Italy, the north parts chiefly falling to the share of the Lombards. *Narses*, General of *Justinian's* army, reduced the power of the Goths, and re-established the dominion of the Greek Emperors in the year 553. The Lombards, who came from Pannonia, ravaged Italy in 568, and made large settlements there. The Exarchs

of Ravenna, who ruled under the Greek Emperors, endeavoured to expel them, maintained a long war against that people, and at last brought them into a kind of subjection. Various revolutions and many civil occurrences ensued, extraneous to our plan, or inconsistent with the brevity of it. But the Lombards obtaining possession of a great part of Italy, did, in confederacy with other northern nations, lay siege to Rome *A. D.* 755. Pepin, king of France, to which dignity he was exalted by the Pope, was prevailed on to march to the relief of the imperial city. He raised the siege, obtained several victories over the Lombards, recovered Ravenna out of their hands, and this with the adjacent territory, together with the dominion of Rome, he conferred upon the Pope *A. D.* 756, who thereby became a temporal prince*. The Lombards endeavoured to regain Ravenna, whereupon Charlemagne, the son of Pepin, invaded Lombardy, and took *Didier* the last king prisoner. He confirmed Rome and Ravenna to the Pope, to which he added, in a very princely manner, the Marquisate of Ancona, and the Dutchy of Spoleto or Umbria, *A. D.* 774. Thus the Roman Pontif was exalted to the dignity and opulence of a secular

* A considerable part of the book of Revelation, does, with evident propriety, relate to the Church of Rome. Among other passages the following one is applied to the Pope, viz. ch. xiii. v. 18. "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man: And his number is six hundred, three score and six." The celebrated Sir Isaac Newton decyphers it thus: The words *αἰωνος* and *מלכות*, the man of Latium, or of Rome, consist of numeral letters, which taken together, make 666. This number of years from the date of the Revelations, which was about *A. D.* 90, brings us to the year 756, which remarkably coincides with the precise time I have pitched on, at which period the Roman Pontif became a tem-

secular monarch, put in possession of a large extent of territory, and invested with new powers and titles. This gave fresh additional lustre to his former rank and grandeur, emboldened his ambitious pretensions, and enabled him more effectually to prosecute his schemes of absolute supremacy.

In return for all these mighty favours, the Pope Leo III. crowned Charlemagne Emperor of the Romans *A. D.* 800.

It may here be remarked as a kind of key to the original history of Europe, that a new empire was thus founded in the west, which comprehended Italy, France, Germany, and part of Spain. The emperors themselves fixing their residence in Germany, divided Italy into several districts and governments. The governors of these different provinces at last assumed to themselves a sovereign power; and some of them purchased with considerable sums of money grants from the Emperor, confirming their respective titles, by which, separate states and principalities came to be erected. In imitation of this, and in process of time, also from a concurrence of various events, France, Spain, and other European provinces were also disjoined, and formed into distinct independent kingdoms, such as in general subsist at this day.

I may likewise observe, tho' by way of anticipation, that the Popes did for a long time acknowledge,

temporal power, represented by a beast according to prophetic language. From this as a kind of key, and from a variety of other circumstances, is the æra of the fall of Babylon to be calculated. Mr Fleming, who is followed in this opinion by Sir Isaac Newton and Mr Lowman, reckons, that the reign of popery is to continue from that time, viz. 756, for the space of 1260 years, and that about the year 2016, or 2000, the papacy will be entirely destroyed, and that then the Millennium will commence.

ledge, that they held their territories of the Emperor, who was considered the grand patron and protector of the Church. This continued to be the case until the reign of the Emperor Henry IV. The Roman Pontif, particularly Gregory VII. tired of subjection, and observing how the Emperors sometimes opposed, at other times annulled the election to the Papal-chair, shook off his allegiance, embroiled the Emperor's affairs in Germany and Italy, excited insurrections against him, and even excommunicated his imperial master. And indeed the usurpations of the Pontif upon the prerogatives of the Emperor, occasioned frequent wars between them, of which the Italian princes availed themselves, and thereby procured for their respective states, peculiar powers and privileges from the contending parties, who courted their alliance.

The annual revenues of the Pope, may amount to one million Sterling, chiefly raised by a monopoly of corn, and from duties on wine and various other provisions. He lives in great splendor and magnificence, and always makes his appearance with distinguished state and solemnity. He is despotic in his own dominions, and regulates the administration of civil government by himself alone, and such officers as are of his sole nomination. The conclave of Cardinals only intermeddle with ecclesiastical affairs, who are seventy in number, and whose vacancies are filled up by the Pope's appointment. His ecclesiastical dominion is far superior to his temporal. The secular Clergy have a great dependance upon him, but the Monks and Regulars are entirely at his devotion, and may be accounted his militia, or indeed a kind of standing army, ready to obey his orders *. They are in all
computed

* Paul IV. boasted of having 288,000 parishes, and 44,000 monastries under his jurisdiction.

computed to be about two millions in number, who are dispersed through all the countries of the world, to assert his supremacy over princes and people, and to promote the doctrines and interests of the church of Rome. The revenues which the regular clergy and monastic orders draw from Roman Catholic kingdoms are reckoned by some to amount to twenty millions Sterling *per annum*, besides casual or certain stated oblations to the church, on their liberality to which the people are taught to believe their eternal salvation depends.

With respect to the doctrine of the church of Rome, they admit the Divine authority of the Old and New Testaments; and it would be well if they did rest there, and would, as Protestants do, acknowledge Scripture the only infallible rule of faith and manners. But they likewise assert the supremacy and infallibility of the Pope, put many false glosses upon sacred writ, and have introduced many uncommanded rites, absurd superstitions, and dangerous doctrines, quite inconsistent with and repugnant to it. It is not easy to enumerate them all, but the following articles may serve for a specimen.

They set out with maintaining the supreme authority and infallibility of the Pope, as a fundamental principle; and that it is necessary for every human creature to be subject to the See of Rome, of all which there is no manner of mention made in holy Scripture.

They teach the doctrine of purgatory, or of an intermediate state of punishment in the other world, out of which souls are to be delivered by masses and prayers. Hence their numberless prayers for the dead, as if still in a state of probation. And yet this opinion is unsupported by any reason, but the

the immense wealth and profit which it brings into the purses of the priests.

Another of their tenets which they sacredly conform to, is the invocation and worship of the Virgin Mary *, and of saints departed, whom they think proper to canonize. Yet this is not only destitute of Scripture-warrant or example, but confessed by themselves not to have been known or practised in the three first ages of the Church, because it looked too like the Heathen idolatry.

The worship of images is an avowed doctrine and practice of the Romish Church, though expressly prohibited in the second commandment.

Prayers, and the service of God in an unknown tongue, is maintained amongst them, though contrary to the very nature and end of all religious worship, and plainly condemned by the Apostle Paul.

The

* When I was in France, I have heard with astonishment, "O gloriosa Maria!" much oftner repeated in prayer than the sacred names of God and Christ.

Will the Reader permit me to record a small anecdote which serves to shew the ingenious arts made use of in Roman Catholic countries, for maintaining the idolatry of their church, and a high veneration for the Virgin Mary in particular? In one of the principal churches in France I observed a magnificent marble statue of Lewis XIV. in his royal robes, and with a crown upon his head. He was represented to the life in an attitude of devotion, upon his knees, and with an elevation of eyes and hands. At last, it occurred to the clergy of that cathedral, that it would answer pious purposes, to erect a statue of the Virgin Mary directly fronting the grand monarch. This was accordingly done; and by this device the king appears in a posture of adoration directed to the Virgin. Her dress was perfectly modish in hoop and petticoat, and enriched with the finest Flanders lace I ever saw. I unwarily took hold of her apron, that I might the better observe its exquisite fabric, when one of the priests checked me for my Protestant presumption.

The same thing may be said as to their locking up the Scriptures from the people in unknown language, and mostly confining the use of it to the priest, contrary to the command of the Scriptures themselves, and to the design of Almighty God in writing and publishing them.

Their doctrine of transubstantiation, as if the bread and wine in the sacrament were by the power of the priest, or at his word, converted into the real body and blood of our Saviour, is so flagrantly repugnant to reason and sense, and so utterly absurd, that nothing can equal it.

The giving the communion in one kind only, by with-holding the cup from the laity, is evidently contrary to our Lord's institution of the sacrament in both kinds.

Another false doctrine they espouse is, the repetition of Christ's propitiatory sacrifice in the mass, so often as that is celebrated. Yet this is both needless and groundless, and quite inconsistent with Scripture, which says,—That by one offering Christ hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

They likewise inculcate, that to the due administration of the sacraments, an intention in the minister who officiates, to do what the parties partaking desire, is requisite. Thus persons may be baptized, and receive the Lord's-supper, and yet really partake of neither sacrament nor receive any benefit, if the priest, in a peevish or malicious humour, should with-hold his ghostly intention, which is both absurd and unscriptural.

And whereas Protestants acknowledge the word of God, as the sole standard of faith and practice, the church of Rome superadds several apocryphal books that are not of Divine original, and likewise

Oral

Oral Tradition, which they pretend has been transmitted from Christ and his Apostles; and declares that both the written and unwritten word are of equal authority.

Their doctrines of auricular confession, by which their priests dive into the secrets of families, and keep the consciences of people in awe; as also of a bank of merit*, and of indulgencies, to be sold and parcelled out according to the prices which are paid, and by which they pretend to assign virtue to the greatest sinners, and to permit the commission, or grant a pardon of the grossest crimes, are indeed master-pieces of wicked and worldly policy.

They likewise assume a power over princes as well as people, *quâ ad spiritualia*: And therefore they take upon them to excommunicate kings, absolve subjects from their allegiance to them, and sometimes lay whole kingdoms under an interdict from word and sacrament, by their papal bulls and edicts.

Their legends as to pretended miracles, their fictitious stories of saints, their pilgrimages, penances, and processions, their external rites and ceremonies and forms, descending even to foppery and grimace, are without number, by which they have not only disgraced but almost overwhelmed Christianity.

Popery is a most astonishing system. It unites into it civil and ecclesiastical power, claims supremacy and infallibility; it affects to join heaven and earth together, the riches of this world and the glories of another; usurps a dominion over the rights, the reason and consciences of mankind, and blends all the superstitions of Heathenism with the best and purest religion in the world.

Such

* The Pope's absolution sometimes extends to all sins past, present, and to come, even for ten or twenty thousand years.

Such an establishment, no doubt, flows from and discovers the deep depravity of human nature, that often corrupts and abuses the best blessings. It is founded in falsehood and ignorance, is supported by ambition, fraud and force, proves productive of general corruption, and is of unspeakable prejudice to mankind. This is permitted by an awful Providence, as a judgment and punishment for the sins and iniquities of the world. By these God has been provoked to “send men strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” And this very reason is assigned by Scripture itself, when foretelling the apostacy of the latter times under Antichrist, or the Pope of Rome. He is described in strong and striking characters, as the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, as the Mystery of Iniquity, as the Whore of Babylon, which sitteth on seven mountains *; “whose coming is with all deceivableness of unrighteousness,” and “who, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God, and who exalteth himself

P

above

* Rev. chap. 17. Every one must perceive this striking feature of resemblance, which is intended for a kind of key; as it is well known, that the famous city of Rome was built upon seven hills.

It might have been not only fatal to St John, but to Christianity itself, had the Apostle in an explicit manner foretold the ruin of the Roman empire then in its glory, on the fall of which Popery was to rear up its head. Prophecy in general is fitly wrapped up in figurative language, and attended with some degree of obscurity, which, however, comes to be cleared away by the accomplishment. The Apocalypse, that mysterious book, so full of celestial machinery, is intermingled with a great variety of scenes, which are *now*, after what our eyes have seen, evidently applicable to and descriptive of the church of Rome.

“above all that is called God*.” Daniel, St Paul, and St John, paint this object in such glaring colours, and with such surprising particularity, as now to leave no room for dubiety in the application †.

The seeds of Popery were sown so early as in the Apostle’s days, by heretics who started up to corrupt the gospel of Christ. Therefore we find them speaking of and condemning “A voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, an adulterating and handling the Word of God deceitfully; the making a gain of godliness, and teaching for filthy lucre’s sake, the forbidding to marry, a foolish abstaining from meats, and neglecting of the body; a vain observation of new moons and festivals; the building upon the foundation of the gospel, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, the doctrines, traditions, and commandments of men.” These, and other corruptions and innovations were soon introduced into the Christian church, which made St Paul say, “The mystery of iniquity doth already work ‡.”

St

* The Pope of Rome assumes Divine titles, holiness and infallibility, and is frequently stiled thus, “Our Lord God the Pope; another God upon earth, King of kings, and Lord of lords.” Of him it is said, “That the dominion of God and the Pope is the same: That the power of the Pope is greater than all created power, and extends itself to things celestial, terrestrial and infernal: That the Pope does whatever he pleaseth, even things unlawful, and is more than God.” In this blasphemous manner do Popish writers express themselves, for which they are rewarded, and some acts of councils run in the same impious strain. *Vide* Bishop Jewel’s Apology and Defence; and Barrow’s Treatise on the Pope’s supremacy.

† This topic is well illustrated by Dr Newton in his *Dissertations on the Prophecies*, Vol. II. Diff. 22, 23.

‡ 2 Theff. ii. 7.

St John observes the same thing, and declares,
 “ This is that spirit of Antichrist whereof you
 “ have heard, that it should come, and even now
 “ already is it in the world*.”

A long time, however, was to pass over before the superstructure of Popery could be completed. And therefore the inspired Apostle further adds on this very subject, “ He who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way;”—“ And then shall that wicked one be revealed; even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders†.” Now it is generally agreed, that what hindered or postponed the full display of Papal power, was the Roman empire, whilst it stood firm and respectable. This explication was, in all probability, given by Paul to the Thessalonians, as well as to other Christians, and the tradition was transmitted from age to age. Hence it was, that the primitive Christians were wont to pray in the public offices of the Church for the peace and prosperity of the Roman empire, as knowing that when this should be dissolved, the empire of Antichrist would be raised upon its ruins.

It is very remarkable, that even before the event, the fathers used to speak of Antichrist, and the Man of Sin, as one and the same thing, and to view matters in this point of light. *Justin Martyr*, who lived about the middle of the second century, as also *Irenæus*, consider the *Man of Sin* as entirely the same with the *Little Horn* mentioned in Daniel, and describe the fraud, the pride, and tyranny of Antichrist‡. Tertullian, who flourished toward the

* 1 John iv. 3. † 2 Thess. ii. 7, 8, 9.

‡ Just. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 250. Iren. Adversus Hæreses, lib. 5. cap. 25.

the end of the same century, when expounding that passage of Paul's prophecy, "He who letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way," makes this memorable observation, "What can this be but the Roman state, the division of which into ten kingdoms will bring on Antichrist, and then shall the evil one be revealed *."

Many other venerable fathers express themselves in the same manner, and with a certain air of assurance.

Now we know, that the Roman empire was swallowed up by the northern nations who broke into it. As their power increased from time to time, so that of the Emperor declined, till at last it was wholly absorbed: And in proportion to this, did the Bishops of Rome rear up their heads, come as it were in room of the Emperors, and fix their residence in the same seat of government.

The Gothic Princes did very much contribute to advance the grandeur and spiritual monarchy of the Pope. Long before this time, the Christian Clergy had artfully propagated an opinion, that they had succeeded to the Jewish priesthood, and were therefore intitled to the same honours and emoluments. The Bishop of Rome came to be considered as the great High Priest, and inferior orders, as Priests and Levites. This proved a fruitful source of wealth and dignity. Now in the eighth century, the Roman Pontif pretended to be Christ's *Vicar*, the Vicegerent of God, and Representative of heaven.

The better to make good his pretensions among a superstitious people, he armed these with all the thunder of excommunication against such as should rebel. This was a tremendous mischief to the northern

* Tertull. de Resurrect. Carnis, cap. 24. p. 340.

thern nations, who considered it as of equal horror with the dreadful interdicts of their Druids *, and that indeed was the severest of all punishments. This idea was eagerly grasped by the aspiring Bishops of Rome, and improved into cruel practice, which was often productive of bloodshed, war, and massacre. A pontifical anathema, not only excluded such against whom it was levelled from the communion of the Church, but forfeited to them their civil rights, confiscated their estates, and deprived them of all the privileges of humanity. This device kept all in awe, and greatly advanced the Papal power.

The barbarous nations who conquered the Romans, had been always accustomed to look up to their Augurs and Druids as almost exalted above the human species: They beheld them with singular reverence, paid them a kind of implicit obedience, and were regulated by them in peace and war †. Upon their conversion to Christianity, they

* Si qui aut privatus aut publicus Druidum decreto non stetit, sacrificiis interdicunt. Hac pœna est apud eos gravissima. Quibus ita est interdictum, ii numero impiorum et sceleratorum habentur, iis omnes decedunt, aditum eorum sermonemque defugiunt, ne quid ex contagione incommodi accipiant; neque iis petentibus jus redditur, neque honos ullus communicatur. Cæsar, de Bello Gallico, lib. 6. cap. 13.

This passage, with others that might be quoted from different authors, may serve to shew the origin of Papal excommunication in Europe.

† Jul. Cæs. de Bello Gallico, lib. 5. cap. 13.—“ Druides magno sunt apud eos (Celtas) honore: Nam fere de omnibus controversiis, publicis privatisque constituunt: Et si quod est admissum facinus, si cædes facta, si de hereditate, si de finibus controversia est, iidem decernunt, præmia, pœnasque constituunt. Si qui aut privatus, aut publicus eorum decreto non stetit, sacrificiis interdicunt.”

Tacitus

they readily transferred this religious veneration to the sacerdotal order in the Christian church, and contemplated the splendor and authority of the Roman Pontif in particular, with a sort of superstitious reverence, whom they would consider as the great Arch-Druid.

Hence it was, that accumulated honours and riches were poured into the Church, with a liberal and lavish hand. Hence it was, that the Popes of Rome rose to such a summit of ecclesiastical authority, as also of temporal power and grandeur. The leaders of the northern nations divided their conquests amongst their followers, and proportioned a distribution of lands according to the merit of their principal officers, reserving to themselves a title of superiority, and a right of summoning all their vassals to war, who were obliged to military service, according to the Feudal system, which they introduced into Europe. At same time they were jealous of an increase of power amongst these fierce and warlike chieftains, some of whom might be tempted to shake off all dependence.

The Gothic kings therefore judged it a proper and prudent step, to bestow upon Christian Bishops, some share of that immense property which they had acquired, and to exalt them to high rank and authority, as a check upon the rising power of their own nobles, and as a counterbalance to all their projects of ambition. Thus their profusion of favour to the Church, might proceed from policy as well as from superstition. Accordingly, the riches and honours of the Christian Church were
vastly

Tacitus de Mor. Germanorum, cap. 7. p. 384. says of these Druids,—“Neque enim animadvertere, neque vincere, neque verberare quidem, nisi sacerdotibus permissum, non quasi ad pœnam, nec ducis jussu, sed velut Deo imperante.”

vastly augmented, especially in the west, during the eighth century. Churches were rendered most superb and magnificent, convents and monasteries were enriched without end or measure. Extensive territories, royal domains, cities, castles, palaces, and whole provinces were conferred upon the dignitaries of the Church, with all the rights and prerogatives peculiar to Princes themselves. Many of them were elevated to the rank of nobility, and were created Dukes, and Counts; and some of them were solemnly invested with sovereign authority. * By this vast accession of power, opulence, and honour, they were enabled to raise mighty armies, to maintain expensive wars, and some of those holy ecclesiastics, though inconsistently with their sacred pacific profession, led on their own troops to battle. † This proved the unfortunate occasion of those violent disorders and desolations which afterwards disturbed the repose of Europe, concerning the Regalia, and Investitures.

The church of Rome, ever watchful to its interests, did not fail to improve these advantages for aggrandizing and enriching itself. She artfully spread an opinion about this time, that God Almighty would regulate the rewards and punishments of a future state, according to the liberality shewn to saints and priests, and to the donations made

* This well accounts for the high rank and wealth of the Episcopal order, which to this day subsists not only in Catholic but Protestant kingdoms, and for the denomination of Ecclesiastical princes, as well as of secular, of Lords spiritual and temporal.

Many of the ancient Archbishoprics and Bishoprics have been secularized and converted into duchies since the Reformation, particularly, Osnaburg, Bremen, Magdeburg, Halberstadt, Minden, Lubec.

† Wilkin's *Concilia Magnæ Britanniae*, tom. 1. p. 90, 91.

made to monasteries and churches. Thus a new method of atonement for sin was pointed out. Penances and penalties could be dispensed with in this life, and in the next, hell might be avoided and heaven obtained, by a handsome sum of money, or by appropriating a good estate to the church. This notion soon prevailed in those times of Gothic ignorance and superstition, and produced powerful effects. It drew within the *vortex* of the church immense treasures. The most opulent were generally the most guilty; they of all others chiefly dreaded and could least endure the shame or rigour of ecclesiastical discipline, and they were best able to buy themselves off, and to give the satisfaction that was properly wanted.

This filled the coffers of the clergy so fast, that the ingenious device has never been dropped to this day; and this spiritual engine, erected for temporal purposes, is still played off in Roman-catholic countries, with wonderful success.

Although it was in the eighth century, that Popery thus reared up its head in a triumphant manner, yet many other previous circumstances concurred towards its rise and establishment. It must be remembered, that when Christianity was first introduced into the world, the new converts to it were necessarily made up from among Jews and Gentiles. All mankind came to be comprehended within the bounds of this twofold distinction. But however different in many respects the Jewish and Heathen nations were, and however different in a particular manner their objects of worship might be, yet they were both remarkably attached to external rites and ceremonies, and too much captivated with the charms of religious splendor. Many of both, when they embraced Christianity, still retained some affection for their respective rites and usages.

usages. The Jews, for instance, insisted on the continuance of circumcision, and the Heathens upon bowing to the east, if not to a rising sun, yet at the name of Jesus, the risen Saviour. The purest profession in the world, the Gospel itself, admits of something external in religion, and prescribes some positive institutions. Hence an undue liberty was taken by many, of conjoining with Divine Revelation, the fond and fanciful additions of human invention. This is the grand master-work and pillar of Popery.

Pretexts would not be wanting to give a colour and softening to such innovations. Sometimes they were represented as indifferent, at other times expedient, again as enjoined by authority, or sanctified by custom. These stole imperceptibly almost into the Church, were multiplied in a gradual manner, and met with too warm a reception, as being agreeable to vulgar notions, and fostering the prejudices of mankind. Cunning and crafty men were at hand to lull and gratify the deluded multitude. False philosophers and designing priests adulterated genuine Christianity by spurious mixtures, and introduced numberless new notions, erroneous tenets, and vain ceremonies, so as to compleat a finished system of superstition. In this work of will-worship, in this enterprize of fabricating religion for secular purposes, the Roman Pontif always assumed a sovereign lead.

He enjoyed peculiar advantages above any of his brother Bishops in christendom. He possessed more wealth, lived in greater splendor, and appeared with a more numerous retinue. These marks of magnificence, though very distinct from those of true religion, were often confounded with it, by the misjudging multitude. Their eyes were dazzled with spectacles of shew and grandeur, their

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judgments influenced by the opinion and practice of those who moved in an orb so far superior to them, they were easily subjected to their authority, and made dupes and tools to their artifice or ambition.

In very early times, Christians were in use to refer matters of contest to some among themselves eminent for their rank, knowledge, or probity, rather than expose their profession, by going before Heathen magistrates. This was a wise Apostolic rule, and was prudently followed by such who had a real regard for their religion. When Bishops were elevated to a certain degree of pre-eminence, and presided over several churches in a province, those who lived under their ecclesiastical jurisdiction, were not unnaturally drawn in to subject the determination of their civil rights, when a difference or debate arose, to their cognizance.

But sometimes matters were of such great importance, that contending parties were desirous to have the point decided by the highest authority.

It likeways often happened, that controversies between Bishops themselves, or betwixt independant monastries arose. In all these, or such similar cases, the parties at variance directed their eyes to the Bishop of Rome, as the supreme Umpire.

This was an incense peculiarly acceptable and fragrant to the Roman Pontifs. They took every method to encourage such appeals and references to the holy See, even after the civil magistrates were become Christians, enlarged their demands, extended their prerogatives, and what was at first a matter of courtesy or choice, came through time to be established into right and law, and was represented as an indispensable part of the ecclesiastical constitution. This had a most powerful tendency to promote the credit and authority of the
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Romish church, and to reduce both clergy and laity under its dominion.

The Pope derived likewise considerable influence from presiding over the metropolis of the Roman empire, and by fixing his residence in the imperial city. This spread a lustre around him, and imparted a degree of dignity, in which he shone without a rival, so that he at last eclipsed the other patriarchs, even those of Constantinople.

Rome had been the grand seat of government and politics, and had been accustomed to give laws to the whole world. When the imperial residence was transferred to Constantinople, this afforded a favourable opportunity to the aspiring Pontifs, to engross into their hands a large share of power, and to assume superior majesty. These naturally appeared to center in the Pope, now that the Emperor was removed; and the declension of his authority in the west served to confirm the Papal usurpation.

This in like manner was promoted when the imperial residence was afterwards fixed in Germany; and that advantage was improved by the See of Rome with all the address and dexterity of intrigue and ambition.

Besides, the Roman Pontifs pretended to be the successors of St Peter, and to inherit his title, dignity, and infallibility. They founded their spiritual monarchy upon a grant from heaven, and claimed universal dominion by a Divine decree. All this was but bold and arrogant assertion, but, conjoined with more weighty arguments derived from power, interest, and ambition, was not without effect amongst the credulous and superstitious.

Neither was it forgotten, that the Bishops of Rome, during the course of several centuries, had distinguished themselves by their zeal and activity
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in propagating the gospel ; and that some of *them* had endured remarkable sufferings for the sake of it. This was set forth to view with great ostentation, and artfully displayed in all the pomp of panegyric and embellishment. It was therefore inferred, that the See of Rome, so superior in merit, was well intitled to extraordinary respect, and that as she had been, so it was destined she should still continue to be the great bulwark of the Christian cause.

Emperors themselves incautiously threw additional weight into the scales of Papal power. They not only augmented from time to time the revenue and dignity of the Church in general, but of the Roman See in a particular manner. They thought they testified their regard for religion, by ennobling and enriching its ministers, by erecting sumptuous churches, and by endowing of monastries and convents in the most opulent manner. They converted the wealth and magnificence of Pagan priesthood and idolatry into this new channel, and with an unsparing hand heaped up fresh supernumerary honours and immunities. The grandeur of the Christian church was displayed in fullest form at Rome, which had been the seat of superstition as well as of empire, and every thing relating to religion was transacted there, with all imaginable state and solemnity. The Pope took the lead on all public occasions ; and by permission of the Emperors, not only convened, but also presided in the councils. Even these mighty monarchs respected the authority, courted the friendship and alliance of so powerful a personage, and Charlemagne himself declared and adjudged,—That his Holiness being Christ's vicar upon earth, could not be subject to the judgment of man.

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On the other hand, the people co-incided with these views, but from different motives. Amongst them an opinion prevailed, that a division of power was for the security of the subject. The Pope's agents and emissaries artfully propagated this notion, with a design to advance the Pontifical authority; which accordingly it did. This, it was imagined, would serve to retrench and moderate the power of the Emperor, and prove a check to any tyrannical projects from that quarter. A fond conceit was cherished that those ghostly Fathers who pretended so high a regard for the spiritual concerns of the people, would likewise watch over with tenderness their temporal interests. Thus both religion and liberty would be secure, as they conceived, amidst such a contrast of characters in their civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and under such a distinction and division of power; whilst unsuspicious, they seem to have had no apprehensions of infringement, usurpation, or abuse of trust.

The ignorance and barbarism which was introduced by the northern nations, who had for several successive centuries poured into the empire, and the general confusion, turbulence and anarchy which this occasioned, as was formerly hinted, did not a little favour the invasions of Popery: Whilst the darkness and delusion of Mahometism overspread the eastern provinces by the conquests of the Saracens.

Knowledge and learning serve to banish superstition, and wear an aspect auspicious to religion and liberty. Science and rational improvement can only flourish in times of public peace and tranquillity. They hate the noise and tumult of war, and droop their heads amidst fear, and danger and distress. Yet this was the unfortunate situation of matters for a long time together; and the gloomy season

season was artfully improved by the Popes of Rome, for the advancement of their own ambitious projects.

They endeavoured to repress free, rational, religious enquiry, and to recommend and cherish ignorance, not only as the mother of devotion, agreeably to that Popish maxim, but as of singular utility for certain secular purposes. It is indeed surprising to find, that the council of Carthage held even about the year 400, did solemnly prohibit the reading of all Heathen authors. It was pretended that this might infect the mind with dangerous opinions. Even Bishops themselves were therefore excluded. And this method was preferred to a regular refutation of any wrong principles or notions that could be proposed.

The Roman Pontiffs availed themselves of every promising circumstance, and in the progress of things many various occurrences intervened, which gave a spring to their ambition and success to their efforts. When the alluring prospects of power, wealth, and grandeur, concenter in the breast of such an exalted Ecclesiastic, who is crafty, designing and ambitious, it is not difficult to imagine what wide strides, what quick advances superstition and tyranny may make in his reign, much more upon a succession of many such. Special care therefore is taken to secure persons of this stamp for the Pontifical office. This high dignity is not hereditary, which would subject it to many unfavourable chances. It is conferred by election upon a person of experience, and who has been well tried, and by the conclave of Cardinals themselves. He must be of their body, and have two-thirds of their votes, and every circumstance of caution and security is minutely attended to.

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The celibacy of the Clergy, which is a master-piece of Papal policy, is of singular advantage here, by preventing family-connections, and drawing more effectually the attention of the holy chair to the common concerns of the Church. Indeed it gives a wonderful union and community of interest to the whole Roman-Catholic *Hierarchy*, the members whereof compose one mighty republic, under the direction of a supreme head, who is both a spiritual and temporal monarch.

We have had occasion to remark the general prevalence of error, superstition and ignorance in the eighth century. Of this *Charlemagne* was extremely sensible ; and being a Prince of great personal abilities, and entertaining an ardent passion for the arts and sciences, in which he himself was considerably accomplished, he made some attempts to propagate them in his dominions. He drew together such men as were any way distinguishable for literature, caused cathedral and monastic schools to be erected in various provinces, and encouraged a taste for knowledge and improvement. But his good intentions were far from being crowned with proportional success. In those times few could be found of real genius or extensive erudition ; and the best system of learning was confined, perplexed, and metaphysical, very little calculated to refine the mind, or to correct the manners of mankind. Europe in general was then enwrapt in mists of grossest ignorance, almost impervious to the rays of truth, which could not be dissipated by the feeble efforts of some single authors. The venerable Bede is indeed justly celebrated as an author of distinguished eminence. He was born in England, *A. D.* 672, and by his publications in the eighth century acquired great reputation. He wrote on a vast variety of subjects, both of a civil
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and ecclesiastical nature, but very few cotemporary geniuses appeared, either to stand forth as rivals, or to aid him in his literary pursuits.

Charlemagne himself formed a project of at once extending his conquests, and of propagating the light of truth and Christianity. About this time the Saxons were a numerous and powerful people who possessed a considerable part of Germany. They were addicted to war, given to frequent contest and revolt, and proved the occasion of much disturbance in the empire. He directed his arms against them, hoping both to subject them to his government, and to won them over to his religion. They were a fierce and valiant nation, zealous for liberty, and warmly attached to the idolatry of their ancestors. During a war of some years continuance, they exerted themselves with ardour and bravery, but were at last subdued and converted. To prevent their defection from Christianity, which they had embraced with evident reluctance, Charlemagne erected churches, monastries, and schools amongst them, and appointed bishops and priests to preside over and instruct them. He was likewise victorious over the Huns in Pannonia, who were conquered by the force of his arms, and by his means gained over to the faith of the gospel.

✓ He had a high veneration for the Holy Scriptures, which he considered as the grand magazine of universal knowledge, encouraged all to the study of them, employed the learned *Alcuin* to correct any errors which had crept into them, and spent some of his leisure hours in the last part of his life in this pious undertaking. Some too attribute to him the first German translation of the Holy Bible.

Still, however, ignorance, corruption and wickedness prevailed among all ranks to a melancholy degree, the religion of Jesus was not properly apprehended

prehended in its genuine meaning and import, the obligations of morality were grossly violated by the loose lives of its profligate professors, and real piety was obscured, or rather extinguished amidst an enormous multiplication of superstitious rites and ceremonies.

The adorning of churches and chapels with images, and the idolatrous worship of them, was now carried to an extravagant pitch, and occasioned the most violent commotions. This superstitious practice had crept into the Church a long time before. Curious statutes, images, and pictures were hung around in public places of worship, chiefly representing our Saviour, his Virgin Mother, saints and martyrs. At first, this was considered as merely ornamental, and said to preserve the memory of sacred persons and things. Afterwards they were contemplated with peculiar marks of superstitious respect, and at last this degenerated into direct adoration. Hereupon both Jews and Saracens upbraided the Christians with the sin of idolatry.

The Roman Pontifs in general contended for image-worship; and we find the Grecian Emperors opposing them about the beginning of the eighth century in the warmest manner. Philippicus Bardanes did, in conjunction with the Patriarch of Constantinople, order some pictures to be pulled down there, and likewise sent injunctions to *Constantine* the reigning Pope, to remove all images and pictures from the churches at Rome. The lordly Prelate not only disobeyed the Emperor's mandate, but assembled a council in that city, which by his command protested against the imperial edict, and with singular arrogance condemned *Bardanes* himself as an apostate. This produced violent contentions and tumults, which terminated

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nated in a revolution fatal to the Emperor, and even shook him from the throne *.

The Emperors Leo the Isaurian, and his son Constantine Copronymus, were equally zealous and more resolute. They published express laws for the entire suppression of this idolatrous practice. The Clergy, on the other hand, stood up for the continuance of it, as serving for an engine of superstition in their hands, and as proving a source of opulence to their order. The people, misled by their insinuations and authority, and fond of external show and ceremony in worship, considered the conduct of the Emperors as an attack upon religion itself. They were taught to believe, that as these were solemnly declared apostates, this absolved the subjects from their allegiance, and left them at liberty to prosecute their own independent rights.

Upon this a civil war broke out in Asia, in the islands of the Archipelago, as likewise in Italy.

The Emperors were highly incensed at these tumultuous proceedings, and particularly against the Roman Pontiffs, who were the principal authors of all these commotions. They thereupon seized on the riches, and confiscated the lands which belonged to the church of Rome in Sicily, Apulia, and Calabria, and in the provinces of Illyricum, withdrew the Clergy from their subjection to the See of Rome, and brought them under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Constantinople. No argument whatever could ever prevail on the Greek Emperors to restore so rich a spoil to the Roman Pontiffs; and this concurred with other circumstances to inflame jealousies, and to widen the breach betwixt them and the Bishops of Constantinople,

* Moskeimi Eccles. Hist. Engl. by Dr Maclain, vol. II. p. 73.

stantinople, which at last severed the Greek and Latin churches from one another.

The Britons, Germans, and Gauls were of opinion, that images might be lawfully preserved in the churches, but that all adoration of them was highly sinful and impious. Charlemagne entertained the same sentiments, and he employed some learned divines to write upon the subject, and to state the matter in a clear and accurate point of light.

Several councils were convened at different times in order to determine this important point. One was held at Constantinople *A. D.* 754, consisting of 338 Bishops, who made a decree against the worship of images. But another was afterwards assembled at Nice, in the year 787, by whose authority images and pictures were allowed, and the adoration of them was encouraged. Charlemagne was displeased with this determination, and summoned a council in the year 794. It sat at Francfort, and consisted of 300 Prelates, who carefully canvassed this serious subject, and unanimously condemned the worship of images. The controversy, however, still continued in the Church, and occasioned much dissention and disturbance.

Another contest likewise arose upon a mysterious point of doctrine, which related to the derivation of the Holy Ghost. The Latin Church maintained, that the Divine Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son, whilst the Greeks asserted its procession from the Father only. This matter was agitated with great warmth by the contending parties, and served to facilitate the schism between the western and eastern churches.

This rose to a more open rupture in the ninth century, which at last ended in an absolute separation.

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The Emperor Michael did, in the year 858, deprive Ignatius of the patriarchate of Constantinople, and sent him into exile. He advanced Photius, a man of extraordinary learning, in his place, and a council held at Constantinople approved of this measure. Thereupon Ignatius thought proper to appeal to Pope Nicolas I. who espoused his cause, and took upon him to excommunicate Photius. He on the other hand returned the compliment, and in a council assembled at Constantinople got it declared, that Nicolas was fallen from the pontifical dignity, and that his authority was to be no more acknowledged. The provinces which had been formerly wrested from the See of Rome were still held fast in subjection to that of Constantinople; and tho' a solemn embassy had been sent by the Roman Pontif, to demand the restoration of them, this was refused, and the proposal treated with contempt.

Basilus, the succeeding Emperor, recalled Ignatius from banishment, and re-instated him in his former dignity, whilst he confined Photius in a monastery. The degraded Patriarch was exasperated at this treatment; and by his intrigue and influence formed a powerful party against the Bishops of Rome, and charged them with Heresy. Upon the death of Ignatius, the Emperor again promoted Photius to the See of Constantinople, who still retained warm resentments of temper and ambition unfavourable to the See of Rome, and which ministered fresh fuel to the flame already kindled. Such is the precarious nature of human affairs, that Photius was again deposed by the succeeding Emperor. But the haughty Pontifs at Rome not satisfied with this, most unreasonably required that all the Bishops and Priests who had been ordained by Photius should be degraded. This arrogant demand
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Part III. *Ecclesiastical History, &c.*

the Greek Church would not submit to on terms. This occasioned further disputes and mosities, and greatly increased the jealousy misunderstanding which had so long subsisted between the eastern and western churches.

About the year 830, a new and famous controversy sprang up, relating to the holy Eucharist. Pascaſius Radbert, abbot of Corbey, published a book concerning the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Therein he maintained, that after the priest had consecrated the elements of bread and wine, nothing remained of them but the external figure; and that under this the real body of Christ was locally present. He further affirmed, that this sacramental body of Christ was the very same that had been born of the Virgin, that had suffered upon the cross, and which rose from the grave. This unheard-of doctrine created general astonishment; and as it was full of the most palpable absurdity, one would have thought that it would have been universally exploded. Yet such was the force of sophistry, priestcraft, and superstition in those ages of ignorance, that it met with many abettors. The church of Rome, novel and ridiculous as it was, came to espouse and defend it, till at last it was established into a fundamental article of the Catholic Creed. Yet there were many who warmly opposed the introduction of this monstrous tenet. Charles the Bald appointed some learned divines to examine the subject, and to explain it in a just and proper way. This order of the Emperor was executed in a masterly manner by Johannes Scotus, a writer, who surpassed most of his cotemporaries for knowledge, perspicuity, and precision. He plainly declared, and endeavoured by clear, irrefragable arguments to evince, that the consecrated bread and wine in the Eucharist, were only signs
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and symbols of the absent body and blood of the Lord. Whilst he shewed that these were represented solely in a figurative manner by the sacred elements; he also pointed out the unanswerable objections which lay against the strange doctrine of transubstantiation*.

About this time a controversy of a different nature arose, which has been continued through successive centuries to this time, which has occasioned much speculation and debate, and many polemical productions. It related to Grace and Predestination, and was first started by Godeschalchus a German of the monastic order. He maintained that God had from eternity predestinated some to everlasting life, and others to everlasting misery: That the Almighty did not really will or desire the salvation of all mankind, but only that of the elect; and that Christ did not die for the whole human race, but only for those whom God had preordained to eternal happiness.

Some attribute the same opinions to St Augustine; and the Benedictines, Jansenists, and Augustine monks generally lean this way, and defend Godeschalchus, whilst the Jesuits condemn him. Many of his followers endeavour to mollify matters, and to colour over his doctrine by certain explanations. They only assert, that God has decreed to perpetual punishment such whom he foresaw would prove wicked and impenitent, and that their ruin is determined in consequence of their voluntary commission of sin, which was foreseen from eternity; that the death of Christ, considered in itself, extends equally to all mankind, but that its saving effects belong only to the elect. If these were the softening of a friend, the enemies of Godeschalchus,

* This is done in a triumphant manner by Archbishop Tillotson, Sermon 26.

chalcus exaggerated matters on the other hand, and particularly Rabanus Maurus his implacable adversary. These accused him of most dangerous errors, and as teaching that God Almighty had not only excluded some from eternal life by an irreverfible decree, but had likewise predestinated a great part of mankind to everlasting damnation, whilst at fame time he constrained them by a fatal neceffity, to commit thofe crimes which deferved this punifhment. Various councils were convened, in order to determine this controversy, in fome of which the author was defended and juftified, and in others condemned. The council, which fat at Quiercy *A. D.* 849, treated him in a cruel manner; and Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, degraded him from the priesthood, and was fo inhumane as to order him to be fcourged. This was executed with great indecency and barbarity in prefence of the Emperor; and the force of pain compelled the unfortunate fufferer to commit to the flames that juftification of his doctrine, which he had fometime before prefented to the council of Mentz. He foon thereafter died in prifon, maintaining to the laft moments of his life the tenets he had taught. But the injurious methods of violence and punifhment by which he was perfecuted cannot be vindicated on any principles of humanity or religion; nay, they ferve to reproach the ferocity of his adverfaries, and the blind zeal and feverity of the times.

Various attempts were made in the *ninth* century, to fpread the gofpel into heathen countries. Charlemagne had exerted himfelf in this good work, but his religious endeavours were intermixed with ambition, and fupported too frequently by warlike force, which fullied the luftre of his pious enterprizes. Milder methods were now ufed, and
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rational measures more suitable to the genius of the gospel, came to be pursued in converting barbarous nations. The Bulgarians, Bohemians, and Moravians were gained over to Christianity, as also the warlike Russians, who had some time before fitted out a formidable fleet, by which they struck with terror Constantinople, and spread a general consternation through the empire.

About the year 867, the *Sclavonians*, and several provinces in Dalmatia, sent a solemn deputation to Constantinople, voluntarily offering subjection to the Greek Emperors, and declaring their readiness to embrace the gospel. The embassy was received with singular satisfaction, and Christian doctors were immediately sent into those parts, in order to instruct and baptize the people.

These conversions, it must be owned, were very imperfect at first. The excellent religion of Jesus was not represented by the missionaries in all its primitive purity; and the savage nations still retained an attachment to some of their superstitious rites, as to which they were too freely indulged.

The progress of the gospel was, however, much obstructed by the increasing power of the *Saracens*. They had subdued a great part of Asia and Africa, and, in this century, made themselves masters of Spain, Sardinia, and Sicily, so that Rome itself trembled at the sight of their victorious arms. This was not all. About the year 857, the Normans, Swedes, Danes, and Norwegians poured into Germany, Italy, France, and Britain, and spread horror and devastation wherever they came. Their first object was only to plunder these rich provinces, but, charmed with their beauty and fertility, they often formed settlements in the countries which they over-ran; nor were the European Princes always able to expel them: And even Charles the

the Bald found himself obliged to make a considerable resignation to them.

Amidst these scenes of confusion and superstition, ignorance and licentiousness prevailed to a lamentable degree, not only amongst the Laity but Clergy. The bishops lived in luxury, frequented courts, entered into cabals and factions, and shamefully neglected the functions of their Episcopal office. The inferior priesthood imitated their example, and abandoned themselves to indolence, intemperance, and almost every species of vice. Many of the sacerdotal order were so wretchedly ignorant, as not to be capable either of reading or writing, far less of composing with any propriety.

Knowledge and learning were not the taste of the times. Even those of noble rank were grossly deficient in this respect, and many of them who wanted talents to shine in their own proper sphere, betook themselves to the Church, as a ladder to preferment and wealth. The patrons who had a right of nominating to the vacant benefices, often presented such, and others of a similar character, however unqualified and unworthy. In process of time a scandalous abuse crept in, of even presenting laymen, who increased from their connections and by their licentious practice, the freedoms and corruption of the ecclesiastical order. Besides, what farther contributed to such depravation was this, that multitudes of the Clergy, particularly Bishops and Abbots, actually held their lands and fortresses by a feudal tenure. In consequence of this, they stood bound to furnish a quota of troops in time of war, and to appear at the head of them. This occasioned great dissipation, drew off the ministers of religion from an attention to their proper office, gave them a secular turn, and exposed them to many temptations.

A general inversion of character prevailed, which confounded the most important distinctions and professions of life. In this century we have to remark farther preposterous proceedings. For a long time before, the monastic state had been held in high veneration. But now, this rose almost to a pitch of epidemical madness. Kings, Dukes, Counts, and Marquisses, laid aside their sounding titles, despised the offices of their high station, retired from the grandeur of thrones and courts, and buried themselves in convents and monasteries. Italy, Germany, France, and Spain, exhibited several examples of this superstitious extravagance; as if the Almighty could not be served in every station of life; or, as if the Highest did not afford the most ample opportunity, for promoting the interests of virtue and the welfare of mankind, where there is at bottom a real principle of religion.

On the other hand, one might have seen with wonder Monks and Hermits called from their cloisters and cells, by Princes and Emperors to the court and cabinet. These holy fathers forgot their vows, abandoned their devotions and fraternities, and from shade and solitude appeared amidst the most glittering scenes of life, assumed the reins and steered the helm of civil government. Many of the Monks and Abbots were exalted to the high rank of prime Ministers of state, or employed by Sovereigns as envoys and ambassadors on the most important occasions.

The Roman Pontifs availed themselves of all these circumstances, and with unwearied attention sought to enlarge the limits of their jurisdiction, and to gratify their unbounded ambition. Hitherto such who were elevated to the pontifical dignity were chosen by the suffrage of the Bishops, and with consent of the people of Rome. Yet none
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could step into the papal chair without the express approbation of the Emperor. But this method of procedure was now altered. Charles the Bald had obtained the purple in virtue of the good offices of the Bishop of Rome. In return for this important favour, he formally freed the Roman Pontiffs from the obligation of applying to the Emperors, or waiting for their consent. This check removed, the election of the Popes was afterwards carried on with great irregularity and confusion; and many of them were a disgrace to the sacerdotal order, and only distinguished their pontificate by flagitious crimes and enormities, or by an immoderate pursuit of despotic power. The dissention and turbulence of the times proved favourable to their ambition, as contending parties had frequent recourse to them, and warmly solicited their interest. When a terrible war broke out amongst the posterity of Charlemagne, and various competitors stood forth as rivals to one another, and claimed the empire, the Popes of Rome obtained a powerful influence, and at last assumed the sole right of nominating to the imperial dignity. Upon this foundation, and from the actual exercise of it on several occasions, they set up a claim for unlimited universal authority.

When with a lordly air they disposed even of imperial thrones, their encroachments upon the Church and Clergy became more facile and practicable. Accordingly, they now began very much to circumscribe the power of bishops, and the authority both of provincial and general councils. The former must receive confirmation from them, and the latter determine finally of nothing without their permission. The better to colour over and support such usurpations, pious frauds and ingenious stratagems were devised. *Decretal epistles*, and acts
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of councils and fabulous records were forged, pretending with the greatest effrontery to shew, that all this had been the practice and privilege of the Roman Prelates in the primitive ages, contrary to the most authentic history.

When attempts were made by men of learning and ingenuity to detect and expose these cheats and impositions, they were overborne by the more numerous partizans of Popery, and by the dint of ecclesiastical authority ; and succeeding times were so deeply involved in confusion, ignorance and superstition, as to prevent farther scrutiny. Thus the supremacy and majesty of the Roman Pontifs, rose upon the ruins of truth and knowledge, of religion and liberty.

Genuine Christianity was little understood or practised in this century, but in room of it, erroneous tenets, superstitious practices, and devout follies were multiplied. Departed saints were highly regarded, and frequently addressed as so many powerful patrons and mediators, and a stupid veneration was paid to their bones, their cloaths, or to the ground where they were interred, as possessed of a sacred, miraculous energy. Each family, and sometimes single persons, had their tutelary saint to protect and befriend them. The Priests cherished these false notions among the deluded people, and to gratify their boundless avidity for these imaginary benefactors, they often canonized persons of the most worthless character, if they had any thing singular or fanatical in them, at other times invented fictitious names and histories of pretended characters which never existed.

Such was the spirit for relic-hunting, that many undertook hazardous voyages and tedious journeys, in order to procure some part or appendage of departed saints. Any pretended remains
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Part III. *Ecclesiastical History, &c.*

of the first heralds of the Gospel, or of martyrs and confessors, were of vast value, and purchased at an enormous price. To give a solemnity to such superstition, the discovery was celebrated with signal demonstrations of joy, and sometimes with the administration of the Lord's Supper.

Rites and ceremonies and festivals increased to a surprising degree; and a custom now commenced of explaining the feigned uses and purposes of these external observances. This opened a wide field for the excursions of fancy and fiction, tended to support the credit of lying legends, and to hold in faster fetters of delusion an ignorant multitude.

Churches rose in splendor and magnificence, were adorned with costly statues and images, with curious pieces of painting, or holy relics. Superb and sumptuous altars were erected: Lustrations, processions, illuminations were multiplied to an excessive pitch, whilst the Priests endeavoured to dazzle the eye, and to create respect for their order, by officiating in the most splendid robes, and by a frequent celebration of Masses, for the purposes of avarice and ostentation.

It is observed by some, that the Latin church was much more addicted to these outward forms and ceremonies than the Grecian. Many of them derive their origin directly from Paganism. The Barbarous nations who broke into and shared the western empire, could with great reluctance abandon their ancient customs and manners. Nay, they retained many of them, endeavoured to propagate them among the Christians with whom they incorporated, and too easily persuaded the Priests to adopt them into the service and system of religion. Civil polity was gradually modelled according to their laws and usages, and the transactions of

of common life were strongly tinged and regulated by them.

Hence, an account may be given of the prevalence of certain rude and barbarous institutions in this and the following century. None are more remarkable than those severe and absurd methods, which persons were put on to clear their innocence, or to determine the point of right, in doubtful cases *. These were, the trial of the cross, the fire ordeal, cold water, and single combat: All which must appear strange and shocking to us, who are accustomed to see every cause ascertained and determined by examination and deposition, by Judge and Jury, according to the course of a regular process, and to law and practice founded upon principles of equity.

Ignorance and superstition continued to characterize the *tenth* century. The frequent tumults, disorders, and revolutions which prevailed both in the western and eastern world, the enthusiasm of the Monkish order, and the general indolence and profligacy of the Clergy, prevented the improvements of science, as well as the progress of real religion. A few appeared who discovered a love of knowledge and made some feeble attempts to rescue the age from absolute barbarism, but they were unequal to the arduous task, and laboured under manifold difficulties which they were not able to remove.

Leo

* Those who held out their arms the longest, as if extended on a cross,—who walked on a grate of hot iron without being burnt,—who did not float in water when thrown into it,—and who overcame in a duel,—were the just and fortunate persons.

Dr Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. translated into Engl. by Dr Maclain, vol. 2, p. 169, 170.

Leo the philosopher, the Grecian Emperor, held the arts and sciences in great admiration. In this he was even surpassed by his son Constantine Porphyrogeneta. He gave countenance to learning, and proved a generous patron and protector of genius and literature. He himself commenced Author, in order to animate others by his example, as well as to direct them by his superior taste and refinement.

Historians allow, that the Arabians maintained a singular zeal for the various branches of science, and that they at this time produced several philosophers and mathematicians, who were an ornament to their country.

What is indeed surprising, we find that Egypt, though groaning under the heavy yoke of the *Saracens*, yet paid considerable attention to the improvements of knowledge, and that in this country some eminent writers flourished, particularly Eutychus Bishop of Alexandria, who excelled both in theology and physic.

The face of things wore a very different aspect among the Latins. It is generally agreed that this was their iron age, in which deep, deplorable ignorance and superstition almost universally prevailed. It was even near the conclusion of this century before the arts and sciences which had languished so long began to revive. Pope Sylvester II, a native of France, may in some measure be accounted the restorer of learning in Europe. He was a man of a sublime and penetrating genius, of refined taste, and extensive erudition, though mathematical learning was his favourite study. He endeavoured with uncommon ardour to diffuse a taste for science and improvement, nor were his attempts and labours without success in several places, particularly in Italy, France, and Germany. His own pro-

productions, though not to be compared with those of modern times, were the admiration of the age in which he lived. His mathematical figures and problems in geometry were then viewed as so many magical operations, and the ingenious Pontif was regarded by some as a magician, and having intercourse with the devil. * It is said that Sylvester resided for some time in Spain, and was there instructed by the Arabian philosophers. Their schools soon became famous, and were multiplied in different countries, to which youth afterwards resorted for education. The writings of the Arabian doctors were translated into Latin, to give them a more general spread, and the Spanish Saracens in particular, who excelled in Astronomy, Physic, Mathematics, and other branches of science, are considered by some as the fathers of European philosophy, though now so richly improved and enlarged.

Genuine Christianity was little understood or practised at that time. This was strangely corrupted by an immense number of foolish notions and superstitious ceremonies. Both Greeks and Latins placed the essence of religion in external forms and observances, in worshipping images and praying to saints, in a fond senseless veneration of sacred relics, and in overloading with wealth the ecclesiastical order. The Clergy, instead of extirpating false opinions, or absurd prejudices, nourished the superstition of the multitude, were very busy in peopling the ecclesiastical regions with saints, martyrs, and confessors, and mighty expert in devising new rites and festivals in honour of them. The worship of the Virgin Mary was now carried to an extravagant pitch; and some are of opinion that the Rosary, and Crown of the Virgin,

* Hist. Litter. de la France, tom, vi. p. 558.

Virgin, were first instituted about this time, the first consisting of fifteen repetitions of the Lord's prayer, and of an hundred and fifty *Ave Maria's*; the other of a smaller number. }

The doctrine of purgatory was most zealously inculcated; a kind of middle state, the fire of which was to purify the soul from all remainders of sin. This was a dextrous stratagem for advancing the opulence and authority of the clergy, by whose intercessions, and according to the liberality shewn them, the pains of that place were to be mitigated or shortened. The festival of *all souls*, was in this century added to the Latin Calendar, in behalf of all who were labouring under the trial of purgatory, which was at first introduced by the zeal of Odilo, abbot of Cluni. }

The creation of saints was a privilege which the Pontiffs of Rome claimed to themselves. Accordingly, John XV, did, with all the solemnities of a formal canonization, enroll *Udalric* Bishop of Ausburgh, among the number of departed saints. This was transacted in the year 993, and from that time forward, this new canonized saint was intitled to receive religious worship. However, we find that both before and after this, some Bishops of principal rank, as well as councils, exercised the power of conferring saintship by their own authority. And this continued till the twelfth century, when Pope Alexander III, deprived Bishops and councils of this God-making privilege, and declared it a peculiar prerogative of the Pontificate.

In this age of ignorance and credulity, the monks and priests found it no difficult matter to propagate, with success, the most vain and groundless imaginations. None however struck the world with such universal panic and consternation, as the opinion which generally prevailed throughout Eu-

rope, that the day of General Judgment was near at hand, and would certainly take place at the conclusion of this century. This notion arose from a misapprehension of a passage in the book of Revelation, * concerning Satan's being bound a thousand years. This they computed from the birth of Christ to the present period. They then concluded that the devil would be loosed for a short season, after which the conflagration of the world would immediately ensue. Amazing multitudes of people were wrought upon by a firm persuasion of this, to abandon all their worldly concerns and connections, and to repair to the Holy Land, where they expected that Christ would make a solemn appearance, in order to judge the world. It is impossible to describe in the most pathetic language, the general tremor and confusion which were every where occasioned among miserable mankind. Their hearts meditated terror. Dread and trepidation invaded every breast. Pious superstition let loose, multiplied fearful sights and scenes without end, and converted the least surprising objects or events into awful omens. An eclipse of sun or moon, or an airy meteor depopulated cities and villages, and made the wretched inhabitants fly for refuge to dens, and caverns, or among hills and mountains. In some places, temples, palaces, and houses, were allowed to go to ruin, from a belief there would be no farther occasion for them. The Clergy encouraged the prevailing persuasion, which redounded to their great emolument. The alarmed multitude flocked to the churches and altars, flung themselves at the feet of these men of God, besought their protection and prayers, and the more easily to obtain them, consigned or bequeathed to the sacerdotal orders all their wealth and estates,

* Rev. xx. 1, 2, 3, 4.

estates, which they imagined * could now be no longer used. Thus the Church was enriched by a vast accession of treasure, and of fair, extensive possessions.

This contributed still more and more to the dissipation and licentiousness of the Ecclesiastical Order, who were shamefully illiterate and immoral, both in the eastern and western provinces. Theophylact, Patriarch of Constantinople, made a simoniacal traffic of all places and preferments in the Church. This spiritual pastor, instead of setting an illustrious example of piety, virtue, and fidelity, was wholly devoted to luxury and pleasure, and is said to have kept in his stable no less than 2000 hunting horses, which he fed with pignuts, dates, dried grapes, and figs steeped in the richest wines. }

The Roman Pontiffs, in a long succession, exceeded every thing for wickedness. Not only Protestant but Popish historians declare, that many of them were monsters of vice, and stood chargeable with the most enormous crimes †. Yet so powerful was the reign of superstition and ignorance, that these ambitious Prelates still increased their power, and daily encroached upon the jurisdiction of Bishops and councils, and even upon the rights of Kings and Emperors. Some sycophants, who wanted to ingratiate themselves into favour, publicly maintained, that the Popes were not only Bishops of Rome, but of all Christendom.

Many Bishops and Abbots followed the example of their adventurous and aspiring chief, and claimed extensive powers and privileges. They insisted on an immunity for themselves and their vassals from

* The preamble of most of these grants, runs thus—*Appropriquitae mundi termino, &c.*

† Mosheim's *Eccles. Hist.* vol. II. p. 201. &c. Dupin's *Eccles. Hist.* vol. II. p. 61. &c.

from the jurisdiction of the civil magistrate, and from all taxes and imposts. Not satisfied with this, they pretended to a right of presiding over their provinces and territories, not only in spiritual but temporal matters, and of being invested with the title and authority of Dukes and Counts of the empire. Their ambition was now more amply gratified than formerly by the secular Princes, to whom they addressed their requests.

These saw, with regret, the continual contests which subsisted between the civil governors and the ecclesiastical rulers. They themselves entertained a secret veneration of the sacred order; and they hoped to confirm their own dominion by a compliance in favour of such, who had a commanding influence among the people. From this time forward, we find in a more particular manner, a great many of the sacerdotal order, raised to civil rank and pre-eminence, distinguished with all the titles of nobility, cloathed with characters, and engaged in offices, very remote from their spiritual functions.

On the other hand, it was no unusual thing to confer ecclesiastical dignities on civil magistrates and officers of the army, who, by a strange transmutation were converted into Priests and Prelates: Lay-presentations multiplied, and the most ignorant and flagitious were often most readily promoted.

In this century the Saracens were zealous in propagating the Mahometan religion in Asia and Africa. Many Christians were unhappily seduced into it; and the Turks, a brave, but savage people, who inhabited the northern parts, near the Caspian sea, were prevailed on to embrace it. Still, however, they continued implacable enemies to the Saracens, aided the *Persians*, who were oppressed and plundered by them, and at last expelled them the kingdom

kingdom of Persia. They carried their victorious arms into other provinces subject to them, which they gradually subdued, and thus laid the foundations of the Ottoman empire, upon the ruin of that of the Saracens.

Poland embraced Christianity *A. D.* 965. The gospel obtained a more firm and stable footing in Russia *A. D.* 987. It likewise spread its sacred light into Hungary, Denmark, and Norway. From thence it was diffused into adjacent countries, also into Iceland and Greenland, and travelled to the Orkney islands, at that time under the dominion of the Norwegian princes.

Otho the Great was indefatigable in propagating the Christian religion throughout the empire, particularly in Germany. With this view, he, with a pious and princely munificence, erected and endowed the bishoprics of Magdeburgh, Meissen, Brandeburgh, Naumburgh, and Havelberg.

Rollo, the famous pirate, son of a Norwegian count, heading a desperate band of Normans, made a descent upon France, and seized some of the maritime provinces, particularly Bretagne and Neustria, now called Normandy.

The Normans were almost destitute of every sense of religion; and during a great part of this century, committed cruel hostilities against the Christians, and infested many parts of France. Nominally, however, they professed the gospel, of which they were entirely ignorant, in compliment to their warlike leader. Charles the Simple, unable to resist or expel this bold invader, promised to assign to him the territory he possessed, upon condition of his embracing Christianity, and espousing his daughter Gifela. These terms were agreed to, and an amicable accommodation was adjusted. This Rollo was baptized Robert; and it is from him

{ him that the illustrious line of the Dukes of Normandy derives its origin.

Thus were Christian princes sometimes obliged to purchase peace at the expence of some of their dominions. To this measure they were more readily prompted, when by such generous concessions they allured infidel chiefs to the faith of the gospel, by the energy of which they hoped also to civilize the ferocious people who followed their standards.

This proved to be the case in a remarkable manner with respect to the Normans in the *eleventh* century. These rough warriors polished apace after their conversion to Christianity, and distinguished themselves by an ardent pursuit of religion and knowledge. Their magnanimous prince, *William the Conqueror*, gained a compleat victory over Harold, and at one blow obtained the crown of England *A. D.* 1066. He was accounted the Great Mæcenas of the age; and persuaded that the most effectual method he could take of establishing himself in his new dominions was by dispelling ignorance and barbarism, and substituting knowledge and instruction, he, for this end, invited some learned men among the Normans to settle in England.

Arts and sciences began to revive, and public schools were now opened in many places, upon a more respectable footing than formerly, and under the direction of more able masters.

The sacerdotal orders of every denomination continued, however, in a course of corruption and degeneracy. The immense wealth which had flown into the Church, and the exalted honours conferred upon it, sunk them into indolence and luxury, and made them shamefully to neglect the important duties of their sacred station. The Roman Pontiffs strained every nerve, and devised every stratagem for enlarging the limits of their authority,

rity, and by policy and perseverance rose to the highest pitch of power. They aspired to the character of sovereign legislators, and asserted their title to superintend bishops and councils, and to dispose of all ecclesiastical promotions and benefices. They were addressed by the names of Universal Lords and Pastors, and they claimed to themselves a general jurisdiction over princes and people *.

Leo IX. was the first who publicly made these arrogant demands, and his ambitious successors imitated his example. Yet were there not wanting some who opposed these high and presumptuous pretensions. Some bishops and councils made a shew of privilege; and some princes endeavoured to check the career of such dreadful despotism. William the Conqueror, when firmly seated on the throne of England, boldly asserted the rights of royalty, and sometimes opposed the usurpations of the Apostolic See.

Gerrard, Bishop of Florence, was crowned with the Papal mitre *A. D.* 1058, and assumed the name of Nicolas II. He assembled a council at Rome in the

* The Reverend President Edwards, speaking of the gradual rise of Antichrist, says, That in primitive times, the Pope was only the Minister of a congregation; then a standing Moderator of a presbytery; then a diocesan Bishop; then a Metropolitan or Archbishop; then he became a Patriarch; then he claimed the character of Universal Bishop over the whole Christian Church, which was opposed for a while, but it was afterwards confirmed by the Emperor in the year 606. After this he assumed the power of a temporal Prince, and was wont to carry two swords, to signify both Spiritual and Civil authority. At length he pretended to be Christ's Vicegerent on earth, and to exercise the powers which properly belong to him, and used to be called God on earth, and took on him to erect kingdoms, to crown Princes, or depose them at pleasure, to excommunicate private persons, and interdict whole nations, and to distribute damnation or salvation according to his arbitrary will. *Vide a History of the Work of Redemption, by Mr Edwards, p. 276. 277.*

the year 1059, and got a decree passed, changing the ancient form of electing the Pontifs. These had been formerly chosen by the Cardinals, the Roman clergy, nobility and burgesſes, with conſent of the Emperors. This often occaſioned the moſt violent tumults and animoſities in Rome, and divided Italy into continual factions. For the future the election was to proceed by the ſuffrage of the Cardinals only. Theſe originally conſiſted of the ſeven Biſhops of Rome, and of the Cardinal clerks or preſbyters, who preſided over the twenty-eight pariſhes or principal churches in Rome. Thus many of the moſt reſpectable members, who had been for time immemorial entitled to a vote, were now excluded, from pretexts of public tranquillity, whiſt ſecret views of ſacerdotal power and ambition lurked at bottom. In proceſs of time, and particularly under Alexander III. ſome others were admitted into the college of Cardinals, in order to appeaſe the reſentments kindled by the injurious edict of Nicolas.

Hildebrand, who aſſumed the name of Gregory VII. obtained the Papacy in the year 1072. He was a man of extraordinary abilities, and of unbounded ambition. He conceived a project of univerſal empire, and made wide ſtrides towards it, ſuch as muſt appear very aſtoniſhing. He poſſeſſed a ſoul ready in forming the moſt arduous ſchemes, and active to execute the moſt difficult enterprizes. He had a penetrating genius, amazing fortitude, and invincible obſtinacy. His temper was bold and arrogant, at ſame time inſidious and ſubtle. Deſtitute of virtue and religion, he ſuffered no reſtraints from dictates of conſcience, and with unabating vigour he purſued, though in the moſt lawleſs manner, all the objects of his extravagant deſires,

fires, and all the measures which he imagined conducive to their accomplishment.

He laboured incessantly to subject all Christendom to the dominion of the Roman Pontif. He usurped a power over Church and State, retrenched the privileges of bishops and councils, that he might draw them more thoroughly into a dependance upon himself; and, with the same view, he endeavoured to exclude sovereigns from any influence or authority over the ecclesiastical orders, or their proceedings, even within their own dominions. Nay, he arrogantly attempted to subject to the Pontifical jurisdiction all the kings and princes of the earth, and to render them and their subjects tributary to the See of Rome. He actually projected a plan of an annual assembly of bishops to be held at Rome, in order to sit in judgment upon Emperors and Sovereigns, and to determine the distribution of crowns and kingdoms. But this scheme of mad ambition was resolutely opposed, particularly by the Emperors, and by the British and French monarchs. Such was the uncontrollable insolence of ambition in Gregory VII. that, addressing himself to Philip I. King of France, he reminded him, that both his soul and kingdom were under the dominion of St. Peter, whose vicar and successor he was. He pretended, that Saxony was a feudal tenure holding of the See of Rome, by a grant of Charlemagne, which could not be produced. He extended his claim to the whole kingdom of Spain, without any vouchers but Papal assertion and authority. And by these, the King of Arragon, and some Spanish princes, were actually persuaded to pay an yearly tribute to the Pope.

He wrote a letter to William the Conqueror, demanding payment of the Peter-pence *, and sum-

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moned

* Peter-pence was an ancient tax of one penny on every house in England, first granted *anno* 725, by *Ina* King of the West Saxons, and which continued till the reign of Henry VIII.

moned him to Rome as a son of the Church, to do homage for the kingdom of England as a fief of the Apostolic See. The first was indeed complied with ; but the latter was refused with a noble disdain, and the English monarch declared, that he held his kingdom only of God and of his own sword.

He wrote circular letters to all the princes in Germany, desiring them to surrender their respective provinces into his hands, that they might have the honour of holding them by a grant from the Roman See, and be considered as her vassals. Wild and extravagant as such a requisition was, some were so tame and tractable as to submit to it. The son and heir of *Demetrius* King of Russia, went to Rome, declared his subjection and allegiance to the Pope, and received from his hands a grant of that kingdom, which in fact he was born to inherit.

This aspiring Pontif extended his pretensions also to Hungary, Poland, Norway, and Dalmatia, and invested some who were compliant with his terms with the titles and authority of kings. By his intrigues and familiarity with Mathilda, widow to Godfrey Duke of Lorrain, and the most opulent Princess in Europe, he obtained a grant of her extensive possessions, part of which goes to this day to constitute the patrimony of St. Peter.

At this time, simony and concubinage prevailed to a prodigious degree among the ecclesiastical orders. These Gregory, with all his might, endeavoured to restrain. With this view, he convened several councils, and got the strictest edicts past against them, whilst he confirmed, in the strongest manner, all laws and decrees which had been formerly enacted.

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In a council held at Rome *A. D.* 1074, it was solemnly determined, that all the sacerdotal orders should abstain from marriage, and that such as had at that time wives or concubines, should immediately dismiss them, or resign their ecclesiastical character. This severe law concerning the celibacy of the Clergy, was enforced without distinction, and in the most rigorous manner. Such as did not comply nor shew ready obedience, were not only subjected to the discipline of the Church, but were given over to the civil magistrate, to be punished as rebellious subjects, and to be stript of all their worldly substance. So harsh and unreasonable an edict, which dissolved all matrimonial ties, blasted the most tender conjugal affections, and involved parents and children in so much misery, was received with the loudest murmuring and remonstrance. Many priests chose rather to relinquish their sacred profession, with all its emoluments, than cruelly abandon their beloved spouses and tender offspring. Some separated themselves from the Romish communion, and poured obloquy and contempt upon the imperious Pontif, for such arbitrary proceedings. And others excited dreadful tumults and commotions in various provinces, which did not a little disturb the repose of the Papal throne. But Gregory was firm, resolute, and intrepid in whatever measures he once adopted.

His design of extirpating simony was attended with still greater difficulties, and proved the occasion of the hottest contest, which embroiled both Church and State in deep distress, confusion and war. The Emperors and Princes had been for a long time in use of promoting to ecclesiastical dignities. These were now sold to the highest bidder in a scandalous manner. Thus the secular powers preserved a kind of sway and sovereignty in the Church,

Church, at same time they increased their revenues by the sale of ecclesiastical preferments. Henry IV. thought proper to oppose the Pope's legates, who were sent into Germany to prosecute such who had been guilty of simoniacal practices. This was a grand object in the view of the Roman Pontif, as his aim was not only to suppress the crime of simony, but to wrest out of the hands of secular rulers, the investitures they gave to bishops and abbots by the ring and crozier, in consequence of which they were consecrated and installed.

Gregory was highly exasperated at the ungracious reception of his legates, and assembled another council at Rome *A. D.* 1075, which excommunicated several German and Italian bishops, and some of the Emperor's prime favourites, who chiefly negotiated the traffic of simony. He also passed an edict, by which a solemn anathema was pronounced against all who received the investiture of a bishopric or abbacy from the hands of a layman, as likewise against those who should perform the investiture. This alarmed and astonished the Princes of Europe, and produced many direful calamities. The divided state of the empire proved favourable to the ambitious views of the Pontif, and some of its Princes became attached to him. This emboldened *Gregory* to summon the Emperor to Rome to answer for his conduct. Such insolent behaviour enraged Henry to the highest degree. In the heat of his indignation, he assembles a council at Worms, where the Pope was charged with many atrocious crimes, and degraded from his pontificate: At same time an edict was issued for electing another in his place.

Gregory, incensed with such unusual contempt, thunders out his anathemas against the Emperor, deposes him from the imperial throne, passes a sentence

tence of excommunication upon him, and releases his subjects from their oath of allegiance. Hereupon war was declared by both parties, which spread its flames far and wide, and for a long time disturbed the tranquillity of Europe.

The civil and ecclesiastical powers divided into two formidable factions, one of which favoured the pretensions of the Pope, whilst the other maintained the rights of the Emperor.

The former, aided in a particular manner by the Saxon states, and Rodolphus Duke of Swabia, assembled at Tribur in the year 1076, in order to concert a scheme for the election of a new Emperor, in case Henry did not submit to the authority of the Apostolic See. The armies of both parties were in the field, and ready to come to an engagement. Matters appeared to stand in a situation unfavourable for the Emperor; and by the persuasion of his friends, he was prevailed on to go in person and wait upon the Pontif. The haughty Gregory treated him with all the insolence of contempt. For three days together he had to stand at the entry of the Pontif's palace, with his feet bare, and his head uncovered, and with a garment of coarse sackcloth. When admitted upon the fourth day, he with great difficulty obtained absolution, but on no account would the lordly Pontif agree that he should be restored to the throne, but left that point to be decided by the Congress appointed to meet at Augsburg.

The pusillanimous behaviour of Henry provoked his friends, and abated their attachment to him, whilst the other party became more resolute, and advanced Rodolph Prince of Swabia to the dignity of Emperor. Henry spurning at the Pope's proposals, reassumed spirit, maintained the imperial title, and exerted himself with ardour and activity against

against his rival. Many bloody battles were fought with various success, victory sometimes shifting from one side to the other ; and these convulsions continued for a long time after the decease of those who were the original causes of them.

Pope Urban II. though far inferior in other respects, improved on the plan of Gregory's ambition, and in the famous council of *Clermont*, got a decree passed, prohibiting the bishops, abbots, and rest of the Clergy, to take any oath of allegiance to secular Princes. Thus he abridged the rights of the civil power, enlarged the Papal jurisdiction, drew that huge body of the sacerdotal order into a more immediate dependence upon the See of Rome ; and this step added fresh fuel to the flames of war.

Amidst these violent contentions for worldly wealth and dominion, the knowledge and practice of religion fell more and more into decay. Ignorance, corruption and superstition prevailed among all ranks of men. Even the monastic orders, notwithstanding their pretensions to superior sanctity, were dissolved in sensuality, and addicted to the grossest enormities. The Roman Pontiffs were more solicitous to extend their own jurisdiction over them, than to promote reformation of manners. They therefore encouraged them to withdraw from subjection to the bishops, and to place themselves under the inspection of St Peter. This greatly contributed both to the increase of Papal wealth and despotism. And with this view, monasteries were vastly multiplied throughout Europe, upon the foundations of a perfect immunity from the jurisdiction of bishops, and also of temporal princes.

The monks of Cluni rose to a high pitch of power and influence. The Cistercian order was founded

founded towards the conclusion of the eleventh century, and spread with great rapidity through many provinces. The famous order of Carthusians was likewise instituted in the year 1084. These affected the strictest austerity of living, and their rules of discipline were every way harsh and rigorous. Yet in process of time, and through the increase of riches, the severity of their customs and usages was relaxed.

The order of Canons, which was a kind of middle rank between the monks and secular Clergy, had been established in the eighth century. But these were now become most singularly dissolute, and ran into such extremes of licentiousness, as to prove a public nuisance. To restrain them within more decent bounds, they were subjected to new regulations, and obliged to conform to monastic rules, particularly in respect of living and eating in common.

Notwithstanding the general spread of superstition, ignorance, and wickedness, yet there were some select souls, men of real penetration and probity, who stood forth as witnesses of the truth. These had discernment and piety to perceive how remote the doctrines now taught were from those of genuine Christianity. They deeply lamented the corruptions and abuses which had crept into the Church, the endless variety of vain rites and ceremonies which were obtruded, the scandalous lives of those who called themselves the ministers of Christ, and the insatiable avarice and ambition of the whole sacerdotal order. They endeavoured to check the growing evil, and to bring back matters to the great original standard of the gospel. But their most vigorous efforts were ineffectual to accomplish a reformation. They were over-borne by a torrent of custom and authority, neither was
their

their zeal always tempered with judgment, nor were the minds of men properly prepared to receive the full light and evidence of truth.

Some learned authors appeared, who endeavoured by their theological and moral productions to clear away the rubbish of the times. Among these held a principal place the famous Berenger, Archbishop of Angers, who so warmly opposed the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, who possessed eminent talents, and excelled both in divinity and philosophy. These attempted, in a more masterly manner, to connect faith with reason, and religion with philosophy; but others soon grafted upon this, dry scholastic divinity, and introduced a cloudy metaphysical system, full of abstruse ideas, frivolous distinctions, and logical jargon, to the no small detriment of real religion and substantial science.

We have formerly had occasion to remark the frequent disputes and competitions which subsisted between the Greek and Latin churches. These chiefly arose from the unbounded ambition of the Roman Pontiffs on the one hand, and the pride and jealousy of the Patriarchs of Constantinople on the other. The former claimed an universal supremacy, to which the latter would by no means submit, but insisted on a spiritual independency, and asserted a jurisdiction over the oriental bishops and clergy.

These contentions were now revived in the year 1053, by Michael Cerularius the Grecian Patriarch, an arrogant and aspiring man. Religious pretexts were not wanting in order to inflame the controversy, and Cerularius opened it by publicly accusing the Latin church of various errors. He charged them with using unleavened bread in the celebration of mass, with eating the blood of animal creatures, and things strangled, with allowing
their

their priests to go beardless, and immersing but once in the administration of baptism. Such were the frivolous objects of religious zeal and contention, in those dark and superstitious times, which were then considered as matters of mighty moment.

Leo IX. highly incensed at the charge, thought proper to assemble a council at Rome, and solemnly excommunicated the Greek churches.

Constantine Monochamus, the Grecian Emperor was anxious to preserve the unity of the Church, and prevailed on the Roman Pontif to send legates to his imperial city, in order, if possible, to restore a good understanding. But they behaved with the highest insolence, and unable to persuade Cerularius to a submission, they formally excommunicated him and all his adherents in the church of St Sophia, and fixed a copy of their anathema upon the Grand Altar, to render it more public and ignominious. The Greek Patriarch resented this violent step by a like measure, and in great indignation excommunicated the legates with all their followers, and, by order of the Emperor, committed to the flames the deed of the Roman deputies. The vehement proceedings on both sides, served to inflame contending parties, to familiarize the ideas of separation, and to produce an absolute and lasting schism in the Church.

It is proper to observe, that the form of religious worship, practised at Rome, was not universally observed. Different provinces were distinguished by peculiar modes of public service. It was now judged decent and expedient to reduce the whole Latin Church to an entire uniformity in this respect. Several of the Roman Pontifs had laboured hard to accomplish this project; but the honour of finishing the same, and giving it stability, was reserved for

Gregory VII. Great, however, as was his spirit of enterprize and authority, he yet found considerable difficulties, and met with powerful opposition in the execution of his plan. The Spaniards, in particular, were strongly attached to the ancient Gothic Liturgy, and for a long time refused with inflexible obstinacy, to receive all the Romish ceremonies amongst them. The nobles of *Castile* pitched upon an extraordinary method for deciding the controversy. They made choice of two champions to fight in single combat, one for the Roman and the other for the Gothic Liturgy. The hero for the latter proved victorious; but it was further agreed on to have recourse to the fiery trial. Accordingly, both the Roman and Gothic Liturgies were cast into the flames, when it seems, as the story is told, the first was consumed, and the other miraculously preserved. This, in other cases, would have been decisive; but the Pontifs of Rome had influence to over-rule this blind determination by their sovereign authority, and obtained their point both in Arragon and Castile in the year 1080.

Such was the zeal of the Church of Rome for establishing a general uniformity, that they even prescribed it, as an universal rule, that Divine worship should be celebrated solely in the Latin language. When this was the mother-tongue, or well understood, such an injunction was not unnatural.

But when this was greatly changed, and new languages were substituted among the western nations, upon the declension of the Roman empire, such an imposition was most unchristian and unreasonable. It was commanding men to worship their Maker in an unknown tongue, contrary to the express appointment of Scripture, and to the very

very nature of all religious homage. Absurd however as such practice is, it was then enforced and is still continued by the church of Rome, by which ignorance and indevotion are unhappily fostered. And such is the force of superstitious custom, or the power of bad example, or the blind respect for hoary antiquity, or the artful designs of misguided priests, that the eastern churches in many places practise the same thing in effect. They will not allow their religion, corrupt as it is, to be profaned by their vernacular tongue, so that the Christians in Egypt worship the Deity, in the language of the ancient Copts, * the Nestorians in the Syriac, and the Abyssinians in the old Ethiopic, although these languages are become obsolete long ago, and are unintelligible to the vulgar. †

A new and most important scene opened in this century, in a grand expedition of the Christians into Palestine, in order to recover the holy land out of the hands of infidels. The bloody flag had indeed been hung out, about the conclusion of the tenth century. Pope Silvester II, then wrote a pathetic epistle, in name of the church of Jerusalem, addressed to the church universal throughout the world, in which he exhorted all Christian powers to unite in a noble confederacy, for succouring their distressed brethren in Palestine, and for re-taking Jerusalem, and delivering it from the Mahometan yoke. The scheme, however, at that time proved abortive. But though the plan of a holy war was for a while postponed, because of the various troubles and commotions
which

* The Coptic is the old Egyptian language mixed with the Greek, and wrote in Greek characters

† Euseb. Renaudot. *Dissert. de liturgiis Orient. origine et antiquitate*, cap. vi. p. 40, 41

which agitated Europe, yet it was not entirely forgotten. Now it was revived in a more effectual manner. Now it was recommended with all the warmth of enthusiasm, as an heroic and glorious exploit worthy the Christian name, to rescue from the tyranny of the Saracens, and from Mahometan superstition, that sacred city and that holy land, which had been consecrated by the birth, the life, the blood, and resurrection of a Saviour, and which had been for so long a time the theatre of a visible miraculous providence. The loud and frequent complaints of the Asiatic Christians on account of the oppressions under which they groaned, and their repeated intreaties for assistance, touched the tender strings of compassion. Motives of superstition and security were superadded: For, according to the taste of the times and the notions of religion which then prevailed, it was accounted an eminent part of piety to undertake pilgrimages, and to pay respect to the sepulchres or shrines of departed saints. But most of all was it meritorious, to visit the holy places of *Palestine*, so remarkably distinguished by God, and Christ, by Prophets and Apostles. Yet this was extremely hazardous, when the whole country was under the despotic dominion of the implacable enemies of Christianity.

Reasons of policy and ambition influenced the Roman Pontiffs to head and encourage such a sacred expedition. The European princes, when fairly embarked in it, were less at leisure to obstruct the progress of papal tyranny. In the absence of many of them, the See of Rome could even with great facility promote its own designs of power and superstition; and additional wealth flowed into the Church by rich donations or legacies, from those who enlisted themselves as the soldiers

diers of Christ in this religious cause. It obtained the name of a *Croisade* or *Crusade*, as it was for the cross of Christ that they fought, and as every one who served in it, wore upon his right shoulder a consecrated cross, composed of various colours. This was accounted a badge of distinguished dignity, and to which large immunities were annexed, particularly a total exemption from civil jurisdiction, upon paying a certain sum of money. *

Gregory VII. the most intrepid and enterprising Pontif that ever filled the Apostolic chair, determined to go in person, and head this religious expedition; an army of fifty thousand men was actually mustered under his command, and ready to follow their sacred leader. But the violent contests in which he was involved with the emperor Henry IV. and other embarrassing incidents at home, prevented him in the execution of his intended plan. *Peter* the famous Hermit, a native of *Amiens*, greatly contributed by his enthusiastic zeal and indefatigable industry, to rouse into action the powers of Europe. He had made a progress through Palestine in the year 1093, and had with exquisite anguish observed the dreadful distresses which Christians there suffered, under the tyranny of the barbarous *Saracens*. Upon his return, he earnestly intreated the interposition and aid both of the Roman and Grecian Pontifs, though without effect at that time. No way discouraged, he travelled through different kingdoms and countries, founding an alarm to war, and urging all to take up arms against the infidel nations. To make the deeper impression upon the superstitious multitude, he shewed a letter wheresoever he went, which he said was written in heaven, and from

* Puffendorf's Introd. to the Hist. of Europe, vol. II. p. 83.

from thence directed to all real Christians, in order to animate them in this religious enterprize.

When matters were properly ripened, Urban II. convened a very grand council at Placentia, *A. D.* 1095, where in the warmest manner he exhorted all, and pressed an expedition into Palestine. This was the most numerous of any council that had ever been assembled, and was therefore held in the open fields. There were present in it two hundred prelates, four thousand more of the sacerdotal order, and no less than three hundred thousand laymen. The majority of this illustrious assembly, did not however approve of the arduous project.

Another council was soon after this called at Clermont, where the Roman Pontif appeared in person. He made a florid pathetic speech, in which he recommended the holy cause in the strongest manner, and with desired success, so that vast numbers forthwith offered themselves as volunteers in this religious war.

Hereupon, an immense army was gathered together, composed of all ranks and orders of men. These made up a motely multitude, raw and undisciplined, who were actuated by different motives, some from superstition, others from the prospect of spoil and plunder, and many from a loose and rambling turn. Grand preparations were, however, made for this unusual warlike enterprize. At last, in the year 1096, a most numerous army of eight hundred thousand men, the greatest ever heard of in modern times, set forward for Constantinople, in several distinct bodies, and under the command of different Generals. From thence they proposed to pursue their march into Asia, and they expected to receive re-inforcement and supplies from Alexis Commenius the Grecian Emperor.

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One grand division was conducted by Peter the hermit, who still retained the habit of an austere monk. Some of the most sagacious commanders judged this a prudent measure, by which they got rid of an irregular unmanageable mob, not easy to be reduced to military discipline, and who might greatly embarrass them in their warlike operations. Peter directed his course through Hungary and Thrace, where the troops under his command committed such cruelties and outrages, as provoked the inhabitants to rise in arms, and cut off a great number of them.

Those divisions which were led on by more expert and illustrious commanders, behaved with greater decency, and, with less diminution of numbers and reputation, arrived at Constantinople.

Godfrey of Boulogne, Duke of Lorrain, a most magnanimous hero, and his brother Baldwin, commanded a body of eighty thousand men, consisting both of horse and foot, a select and intrepid band, and who marched through Germany and Hungary. Raimond, Earl of Tholouse, conducted a separate corps through the Slavonian territories.

Robert Duke of Normandy, Robert Earl of Flanders, and Hugo, brother to Philip I. king of France, embarked their respective forces at different ports, and transported them to Dyrrachium. *Boemond*, Duke of Apulia and Calabria, soon followed, bringing with him a numerous and chosen body of courageous Normans.

This vast and formidable army was esteemed equal to the most arduous undertaking, their progress was marked with terror and desolation, and its approach made even the Grecian Emperor to tremble. Various contests and jealousies arose between him and the illustrious leaders of the Crusade.

fade. But these were soon dispersed by their departure, and the Emperor, with singular joy, beheld these mighty legions pass through the straits of *Gallipolis*, and proceed towards *Bythinia*.

Upon their arrival there, they laid siege to *Nice*, the capital city, of which they made themselves masters in the year 1097. From thence they carried their victorious arms into *Syria*, and reduced *Antioch*, which, with its rich and extensive territory, was assigned to *Boemond Duke of Apulia*. *Edeffa* was next subdued, which *Baldwin*, brother of *Godfrey of Lorrain*, took possession of. After some defeats and some victories in the field, the siege of *Jerusalem* was undertaken, which continued for five weeks. At last the happy conquest of this famous city was accomplished by the Christian army, in the year 1099, * which crowned their sanguine hopes.

All who were not Christians were put to the sword. Above seventy thousand Musselmens were massacred. The Jews were collected into one place, and burnt together. An immense spoil of inestimable value was found in the Mahometan mosques. *Godfrey of Boulogne* was saluted king of *Jerusalem* by universal consent. But when a crown resplendent with gold and gems was brought him, he declined it with a grave and serious modesty, and said, That he could not bear the thought of wearing a crown of gold in that city, where the *Kings of kings* had been crowned with thorns.

However, he governed *Jerusalem* with singular wisdom and fortitude, supported his new dignity with signal honour and moderation, and reserved a small but gallant army for his security, whilst he permitted the remaining troops to return home. He did not long enjoy his splendid acquisition. About a year after the taking of *Jerusalem*, this heroic

* It was taken by Storm on the 15th of July.

heroic Prince, distinguished by many shining talents and virtues, was taken ill and died, leaving his dominions to his brother Baldwin, who assumed the title of King.

Nine kings reigned in a regular succession, and the kingdom subsisted eighty-eight years, till *A. D.* 1187, when the musselmen regained their former dominion. But after the spirit of crusading had, like an epidemic madness, seized the European princes, it was a long time before it could be totally extinguished. Fresh expeditions to Palestine were set on foot from time to time; repeated efforts were made by the Christians; they still had a nominal king of Jerusalem; Richard I. king of England enjoyed this empty title, and in a particular manner distinguished himself in a Crusade to the Holy Land, in conjunction with the French King.

However, before the end of the thirteenth century, about the year 1298, all Christian princes were entirely extirpated out of the Holy Land.

During these 200 years, it is almost incredible the vast number of Christians who perished by sword, famine, pestilence and other calamities, in the prosecution of this religious warfare. According to the account of some historians, it is computed, that above two millions of people were destroyed in these romantic, superstitious expeditions*.

Much has been said by different authors, for and against the lawfulness of these Crusades, which we shall neither discuss nor rehearse; but it may be affirmed with safety, that, all circumstances

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considered,

* For the article of Crusades, and for masterly observations ^{on} that subject, I beg leave to refer the Reader to Dr Robertson's learned and elegant History of Charles V. vol. 1. p. 22, 238.

considered, they were really detrimental to the cause of true religion, and to the civil interests of Europe.

A state of war in general is unfavourable for morals, and often proves a temptation to licentiousness. The sober and sacred voice of piety and virtue, is too little regarded amidst the hurries of a camp, the clangor of arms, the confusions and cruelties of war. These increase in proportion to the numbers of soldiery employed, and to the extent of military operations. Both these were remarkably multiplied in this religious war. The multitude of persons engaged in it was prodigious. They were a confluence of all ranks and denominations of people from most of the western kingdoms and countries : It was Europe rising in arms against Asia ; Christians against Mahometans ; and the scenes of action were both distant and extensive, at same time that the bloody contest was of very long duration.

Whilst it continued, it served to cherish the growth of superstition, from whence indeed it originally flowed. This had a successful spread under the uncontrouled direction of the Roman Pontiffs, who assumed a lead in all these sacred exploits. At same time these greatly augmented the Papal power and tyranny, at the expence of those who became dupes and tools in the hazardous enterprise. The dangers and uncertainties of it were so apparent, that those who assumed the cross, generally made their testaments before they set out, and often left large estates to the Church. *Thus* further enriched to a greater degree than ever,—the ecclesiastical orders, who ought to have been instructors and examples of religion to others, became more and more dissolute. When the dignitaries of the Church, when whole companies of
Bishops

Bishops and Abbots, assumed the military garb, and relinquished their sacerdotal charges, the inferior clergy, freed from all restraint, ran into every species of enormity, and religion was banished and dishonoured. The Latins, when they returned home from these Asiatic campaigns, imported into Europe an immense quantity of pious or pretended relics, and a new fictitious croud of saints and tutelary patrons, a veneration for which proportionably abated the sense of real and rational piety.

The Crusades were likewise prejudicial to the civil interests of Europe.

The power and authority of the natural sovereigns were much diminished, by their absence from their native dominions. These became an easy prey to intriguing and ambitious neighbours. The Roman Pontiffs, in particular, availed themselves of this advantageous circumstance, as was already hinted; nor could the policy or security of the European provinces be properly promoted, when a taste for emigration and conquest was encouraged, and when their princes were removed at a vast distance, and engaged in fighting in another quarter of the globe. Besides, their kingdoms were greatly depopulated by the frequent levies and numerous armies raised for Palestine. Incredible sums of money were transmitted to Asia for supporting the war; and many opulent, respectable families became extinct, or were involved in the deepest distress.

So prevalent and passionate was the turn for crusading, that multitudes, in order to raise money to equip them for it, did rack their tenants and vassals to an excessive degree, who thereby were often obliged to accompany their oppressors from absolute poverty. Robert, Duke of Normandy, mortgaged his duchy to his brother William the Conqueror,

queror, then King of England, that he might be enabled to defray the expences of his sacred expedition. Odo, Viscount of Bourges, sold his territory to the French King. Many of the most illustrious families imitated the example, and sold or mortgaged their lands for the same purpose *.

Thus a very great number of ancient estates which belonged to the European nobility, were transferred to Kings and Princes, sometimes to Priests and Monks, and even to persons of obscure station, who were able to advance ready cash. This produced a strange and sudden transition of property, occasioned general disorder and confusion, and frequently terminated in consequences full of discord and calamity.

The contest that had formerly subsisted concerning Investitures, still continued in the *twelfth* century, and was productive of fresh disturbances both in Church and State.

The right of electing Bishops and Abbots originally belonged to the Clergy. But when the European Princes advanced the sacerdotal order to civil dignity and jurisdiction, when with royal munificence they made grants to them of extensive territories, and of strong castles, these were considered as fiefs assigned, for which the possessors were obliged to do homage, and to swear allegiance to the sovereign who conferred them. Accordingly, they used to repair to court, and to receive a transfer or investiture of such property and privilege as Laymen did, by a certain symbol of a wand or scepter, to which were added a ring and pastoral staff, or crozier,

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* Jo. Geo. Cramer, de juribus et prerogativis nobilitatis, tom. I. p. 81, 82.

Not contented with this, the Emperors and Kings thought proper to assume to themselves the exclusive power of promoting to bishoprics and abbeyes such as they pleased, and at last of selling the dignities of the Church to the highest bidder.

The Clergy, and particularly the Roman Pontifs, considered this custom, not only as a religious profanation, but as a manifest invasion of their peculiar privilege. In order, therefore, to prevent or elude the same, they devised this stratagem, which indeed for some time proved effectual. Whenever a Bishop or Abbot died, they immediately supplied the vacancy by one of their own nomination, whom they consecrated and installed without delay. The sacred solemnity of a consecration fixed the matter beyond all revocation. Hereupon the Emperors and Princes ordered, that, upon the decease of Bishops, their ring and crozier should be forthwith transmitted to the Sovereign, within whose dominion the diocese lay. This mandate the civil magistrate carefully executed; and the Prince, possessed of the badges and ensigns of Episcopal dignity, conferred them upon his own favourites. Thus the Clergy, in their turn, found themselves obliged to confirm such election, which could not with any propriety be evaded. But the Roman Pontifs were too haughty and jealous to submit to such usurpation. They looked upon this as a total deviation from the original practice and privilege of the Church, as an encroachment upon ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and as a flagrant instance of *Eraſtian* presumption, by interfering with the proper duties and rights of the sacerdotal function. The ring and crozier were the venerable ensigns of spiritual power and dignity, which were polluted, as they thought, by passing through the hands of unconsecrated Laymen. It was therefore insisted on by the

the Clergy, that those emblems of pastoral authority should be always deposited with them, who had the sole right of conferring and exercising it.

Pascal II. an arrogant Pontif, fomented the disputes concerning investitures, assembled a council at Rome *A. D.* 1102, and there renewed all the decrees and anathemas formerly thundered out against Henry IV. Not satisfied with this, he instigated his own son to rebel against him, who forced his father, in a most unnatural manner, to abdicate the empire, and who thereupon seized on the government by the name of Henry V. But this revolution by no means answered the intriguing views of the ambitious Pope. The new Emperor would not be persuaded to divest himself of the right of investiture. This disappointment exasperated Pascal to a high degree, and engaged him in harsh and resentful measures against Henry. The Emperor resolved, if possible, to put a period to a contest which had so long subsisted, marched with a formidable army into Italy *A. D.* 1110, and advanced towards Rome.

The Pontif was no wise prepared to make head against him, and therefore proposed to him conditions of peace. These were, that the Bishops and Abbots on the one hand, should resign to the Emperor all those rights and privileges which properly belonged to royalty, such as holding allodial lands, and independent jurisdiction in civil matters, levying or coining of money; whilst he, on the other hand, was to denude himself of the privilege of investing with the ring and crozier.

These articles were readily agreed to by Henry; but the Italian and German Prelates were highly incensed, and a dreadful tumult thereupon ensued. The Emperor did then, without any ceremony, confine the Pontif a prisoner in the castle of *Viterbo*.

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In this unfortunate situation, he was prevailed on to agree that the Emperor should confer the ensigns of the Episcopal office.

This treaty of peace was of a transitory nature, and was productive of very violent contention, and of more bloody wars. A general outcry was raised against the Pontif as a traitor against the Church, and as one who had prostituted the dignity of his sacred character, betrayed his trust, and disgraced religion.

Pascal, ashamed of the part he had acted, assembled a council in the church of Lateran, where, with great humility, he confessed his error, and left the articles of the late convention to their determination, who thereupon thought proper to condemn and annul them. The Emperor himself was excommunicated in several councils, which met both in France and Germany; and to compleat his misfortunes, several German Princes revolted from him, and took up arms in defence of the Church. Henry, however, raised a numerous army, and marched against Rome, whilst Pascal endeavoured to form alliances, to engage succours, and to prepare for a bloody war.

At this important crisis the Pontif died.

But his successors, particularly Callixtus II. carried on the same scheme of opposition, and warmly espoused the interests of the Church, for which he not only argued but fought. At last he discovered pacific dispositions, and was willing to make some concessions, in order to restore public tranquillity.

Accordingly, a peace was concluded at a general diet held at *Worms*, *A. D.* 1122, where it was agreed, that for the future Bishops and Abbots should be elected by those who were intitled, but in presence of the Emperor or his Deputy; that those who are elected shall take an oath of allegi-
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ance to the Emperor ; and that he should no longer confer the *Regalia* by the ring and crozier, which properly appertain to the Church, but only by the *scepter*, as an ensign of civil authority and jurisdiction.

Thus ended the violent contest about the right of investitures, that had continued for about 56 years, which had so much embroiled the nations and desolated the countries of Europe. The treaty of peace was published in the Emperor's camp, the excommunication that stood against him was taken off, and the Pontif assembled what is called the first or general *Lateran* council, which approved all that had been transacted. It was held at Rome in March 1123, and consisted of 300 Prelates according to *Sugarr*, but of 426 according to the Abbot of *Ursperge*. This numerous assembly did likewise enact and publish a great many canons or ecclesiastical laws relative to other matters, particularly against Simony, against the marriage of the Clergy, dissolving all nuptial connections amongst them ; also with respect to the revenues of the Church, and granting a plenary remission of sins to all who should enlist themselves for the Crusade.

In the year 1130, a violent division arose in the college of Cardinals concerning the election of a Pope, which was like to have produced a schism in the Church of Rome. This was carried to such a height, that two were actually raised at one time to the Pontificate, namely, Honorius II. and Innocent II. The first dying *A. D.* 1138, left the other in the entire possession of the Papal chair. His successors were involved in various dangers and troubles. Eugenius III. found himself in so perilous a situation, that he was often obliged to fly from Rome, and for a considerable time he resided in France. Under him, about the year 1150,
Rome

Rome was in great agitation. There was then a scheme formed by a powerful party there, to reduce within a narrow compass the Papal power, jurisdiction and opulence, to restrict the Church to such tithes and emoluments as the Primitive Pastors enjoyed, and to confine its government to spiritual matters*. It was farther projected, to restore the Roman Senate to its ancient honours and privileges, its pristine splendor and glory, and to emancipate the city of Rome in particular, from all civil subjection to the Apostolic chair.

Had this grand plan been executed, and had some skilful hands been employed to support it for a few years, it must have been followed with a general revolution, which would very much have altered the face of affairs in Europe, and would probably have anticipated the reformation in religion.

Frederic I. surnamed Barbarossa, appears to have been determined to maintain the dignity of the Empire, and to clip the wings of Papal ambition. Adrian IV. no way dismayed, was extremely active and vigorous in concerting measures for his own defence. Nay, such was his arrogance, that at the coronation of the Emperor at Rome, *A. D.* 1155, he desired Frederic to officiate as his equerry, and to hold the stirrup whilst the lordly Pontif mounted on horseback. Such an imperious proposal was treated with just disdain, and other incidents of a more interesting and public nature, begot mutual animosity and misunderstanding. The Emperor passed a law with a view to check the growing opulence of the Clergy, prohibiting the transfer of fiefs to the Church, without the knowledge and approbation of the sovereign or superior, whilst he employed his arms in subjecting to his dominion

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* Dr Mosheim's *Eccles. Hist.* vol. II. p. 394.

some small principalities and petty Republics in Italy.

An open war was dreaded as what would follow from such vigorous proceedings, but the storm was dispersed by the death of *Adrian*.

In mean time, Frederic obtained in the council of Clarendon, which was assembled *A. D.* 1164, decisions of material consequence, defining in more explicit terms the jurisdiction of the Sovereign over the sacerdotal order, and limiting their ecclesiastical authority within a narrow compass. Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, would not conform to these constitutions, which, in his opinion, were prejudicial to the Church, and derogatory from the majesty of the Roman Pontifs. This obstinacy drew upon him the displeasure of his king, Henry II. of England, so that he was obliged to retire into France. By the friendly mediation of Pope Alexander III. and the French Monarch, the primate was restored to his country and dignity. Still, however, he persisted in measures contradictory to the court, and created much disturbance, which at last proved fatal to him. For soon afterwards, he was assassinated by four persons before the altar of his own cathedral, whilst engaged at Vespers. Some suspect the King as accessory in some degree to this murder. And so it was, that the Roman Pontif subjected him to severe penance, but canonized his zealous Prelate, inrolling him among the saintly order in the year 1173.

Alexander III. was very intent on promoting the Papal power, and counteracting any designs formed for its abridgement. Accordingly he convened the third council of the Lateran, *A. D.* 1179, where he got several decrees passed that were favourable to his ambitious views. Among others, it was enacted, that for the future, the Popes of Rome should be

be elected by the college of Cardinals alone, two-thirds of whose votes shoul^d be always decisive. And this law still remains in force, by which the Roman nobility, clergy, and people, are solemnly excluded.

A spiritual war, ecclesiastical prosecution and excommunication, were declared against Heretics, whose numbers now increased, and who occasioned many dissensions and tumults by their zeal in propagating their opinions. The right of canonization was taken from the Councils and Bishops, and vested as a high and important matter in the hands of the Roman Pontif alone.

Not satisfied with all this, Alexander actually exercised the prerogative which had been claimed by the Pontifs from the time of Gregory VII. of erecting new kingdoms; and accordingly he conferred the title and dignity of King, with all the ensigns and emblems of royalty, upon Alphonso I. Duke of Portugal, who, as an obedient son of the Church, had some time before made his province tributary to the See of Rome.

Various attempts were made during the course of this century, to propagate the light of the gospel, especially among the northern provinces of Europe, many of which lay yet involved in Pagan darkness.

Boleslaus, Duke of Poland, having subdued the *Pomeranians*, made offers of peace to them, on condition of their embracing Christianity. This was agreed to; and *Otho*, Bishop of Bamberg, a man of remarkable sanctity and zeal, resided for some time amongst them, in order to instruct them in the principles of the gospel.

Waldemar I. King of Denmark, fought many famous battles against the heathen nations, particularly the *Sclavonians*, *Venedi* and *Vandals*. Wher-
ever

ever he obtained the victory, he pulled down the Pagan temples and images, destroyed their sacred groves, and erected the Christian worship in their place. The island of Rugen, near Pomerania, was likewise conquered by this illustrious Prince in the year 1168, and by his means prevailed on to receive the gospel.

The Finlanders were not only defeated in many bloody battles by Eric IX. King of Sweden, and brought under his dominion, but were obliged to become Christians.

The Roman Pontif, Urban III. declared a holy war against the Livonians, a fierce and savage people. He sent several Bishops at once to subdue and convert them. And these holy fathers thereupon assumed a military character, marched into Livonia at the head of powerful armies, and preached the gospel sword in hand. They dragooned the inhabitants into a profession of Christianity; fresh troops were detached from Germany to second the efforts of the booted Apostles, who committed the greatest cruelties; and the miserable people worn out by continued calamity, were compelled to renounce their false deities, whilst the images of saints and martyrs were substituted in their room: And as if they had been to pay for the blessings of the gospel, the Bishops and Commanders seized on their lands and territories, and divided the spoil.

Henry, Duke of Saxony, surnamed the Lion, endeavoured to convert the *Sclavonians*, who inhabited the coast of the Baltic sea. But he pursued mild and honourable measures, much more becoming a man and a Christian, and which serve to immortalize his name to posterity. Among other rational and prudent schemes for promoting his pious design, he erected and endowed three bishoprics which these barbarians had destroyed, and sent

sent grave and learned doctors to instruct the people.

Vicelinus, Bishop of Oldenbourg, resided amongst them for 30 years, who, by the piety of his example, and the assiduity of his care and diligence, gained mightily even upon that rough and intractable nation.

Considering the genuine excellence and sublimity of the gospel, one cannot but lament the methods by which it was sometimes promoted in these later ages, so contrary both to the nature of man, and the genius of religion. Besides, the Romish missionaries gave an imperfect and unamiable view of Christianity, and intermixed with it many inventions of their own, whilst at same time they were too indulgent to the rites and ceremonies of Pagan superstition. And many of these heralds, and propagators of the faith, seem to have been more actuated by personal ambition, or a zeal for the grandeur and authority of the Roman Pontiffs, than by principles of real religion and benevolence. No wonder then if the conversions they effected, were extremely defective at first, and if powerful prejudices remained in the breasts of many who became nominal Christians.

The cause of Christianity gained considerable ground in Asiatic Tartary, by a remarkable revolution that happened there. This was brought about by John a Presbyter, called *Prester John*. He was a *Nestorian* priest, a man of vast ambition, formed for enterprize, and distinguished by eminent talents. Upon the death of *Kenchan*, who reigned in the eastern part of Asia, the famous Prester John invaded his kingdom with surprising magnanimity, and proved successful. From a humble priest, he ascended to a kingly throne; and for a long time swayed a scepter over an opulent and powerful nation,

nation, who submitted to his victorious arms. He enlightened his dominions with the knowledge of the gospel, and left them to his son and successor David. But he was deprived of them towards the conclusion of this century, by *Genghiz-Kan* Emperor of the Tartars, a renowned and successful warrior.

The new kingdom of Palestine, erected by the European Christians in the preceding century, continued in a flourishing situation for a considerable time. But when the Mahometans observed, that very great numbers of their formidable conquerors returned home to their own countries, when they considered the divisions and animosities that reigned among the Christian Chiefs that remained, they resumed their courage, and endeavoured to recover what they had formerly lost. The Christians exerted themselves with extraordinary vigilance and valour, and sustained the shock for many years. But when the city of Edeffa fell a sacrifice, when Antioch was exposed to the same fate, and when their affairs in general began to decline, their spirits drooped, and they then cast a wishful eye to their brethren in Europe, and in the most earnest manner implored assistance from thence. This however was not at first very readily granted. But *Bernard*, the famous Abbot of *Clairval*, a person of ardent zeal and eminent influence, stood their firm and resolute friend, warmly espoused their cause, and preached up the Crusade both in France and Germany with surprizing success.

A grand Parliament was assembled at Vezelai, *A. D.* 1146, where were present Lewis VII. King of France, his Queen, and a vast number of the nobility. There Bernard displayed all the force and charms of his eloquence; there he extolled and enforced the Crusade with such a torrent of persuasion,

persuasion, and with such confidence of success, that the King, Queen, and all the nobles immediately assumed the ensign of the Cross, and prepared for a holy campaign.

Conrad III. Emperor of Germany, was likewise prevailed on to imitate the example of the French King. These two monarchs, at the head of their respective armies marched for Palestine, though by a different rout. After meeting with a multitude of disasters and losses, they arrived at Jerusalem in the year 1148, but did not obtain those advantages that were expected, which made them return to Europe the year following.

Saladin, Sultan of Egypt and Syria, waged war against the Christians of Palestine, and in a bloody battle fought near *Tiberias A. D. 1187*, took Guy of Lusignan, King of Jerusalem, prisoner, and made himself master of the holy city. The carnage, cruelty, and desolations, that attended this campaign, were ready to crush and dispirit the Christians. But they again solicited fresh succours from Europe, and thereupon a third Crusade was set on foot, which proved more successful.

Frederic I. Emperor of Germany, set himself at the head of this grand expedition *A. D. 1189*. He marched with a numerous army into the Lesser Asia, defeated the Sultan of Iconium, and afterwards penetrated into Syria. High expectations were raised from his military prowess and success, when he unfortunately perished in passing the river Saleph near Seleucia.

Philip Augustus the French monarch, and the lion-hearted Richard, King of England, whom we formerly mentioned, set out for the Holy Land at the head of their respective troops *A. D. 1190*. They arrived there the following year, and obtained several victories over the Infidels. The French King soon returned home, leaving a great part of his

his army behind him. But Richard pushed the war with vigour, gave signal proofs of heroic intrepidity, made himself master of Cæsarea, and gained several victories over Saladin. At last he concluded with him a truce for several years, and returned home with his victorious army *A. D.*

1193.

The Crusades gave rise to three grand military orders, whose office it was to protect the Pilgrims travelling to and from Palestine, to assist the poor and sick among them, to clear the public roads of robbers, and to make continual war upon Mussulmen. The first order was that of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, and who were sometimes called Hospitallers, from a famous hospital in that city dedicated to John the Baptist. There the distressed Pilgrims were relieved and taken care of by the charitable Knights, who, in process of time, became immensely rich from the liberality of Christian Princes, and from large donations made them by wealthy Pilgrims. They rose to such a pitch of power and opulence, that *Raymond du Puy*, the Governor of this illustrious order and hospital, offered to the King of Jerusalem to make war upon the Mahometans at their own expence, which proposal was accepted of, and the Roman Pontif gave sanction to the enterprize.

When the Christian powers were at last driven from Palestine, these famous Knights retired into Cyprus. Afterwards they made themselves masters of Rhodes, but upon their expulsion from thence by the Turks, they obtained from the Emperor Charles V. a solemn grant of the island of Malta, where the Grand Knight resides to this day.

The Knights Templars constitute another order, whose proper profession was that of arms alone.

Baldwin

Baldwin II, gave them a very noble palace near the Temple of Jerusalem, from whence they were called Templars, and from whom, as well as many others, they derived great wealth and authority. They performed many great exploits, and acquired high renown in war. But their prosperity and affluence proved their ruin. They ran into all manner of licentiousness, and stained their character, as also the lustre of the Christian name to such a degree, that their order was totally suppressed by the Pope and council in the fourteenth century.

The third order was distinguished by the title of Teutonic Knights of St Mary of Jerusalem. It was instituted about the year 1190, for the support of the Christian cause, the defence of the Holy Land, and to aid and refresh pious pilgrims, so that both war and charity were the objects of this fraternity. None were admitted into it but Germans, and these too of illustrious extraction. For a long while they affected great austerity and œconomy, as if solely solicitous about the welfare of others, whilst unconcerned about their own. In process of time, the Teutonic Knights increased vastly in number, power, and wealth. They then degenerated into a more luxurious course, became ambitious of conquest, and when they relinquished Palestine, acquired by the valour of their arms, large possessions in *Prussia*, *Courland*, and *Livonia*. But soon after the Reformation, they were deprived of a considerable part of these, though a great many *Teutonic crosses* still remain in Germany, and inherit very large estates *.

* Although many calamities and revolutions distracted the Grecian empire, and though the western was deeply embroiled in wars and contests, yet considerable attention was paid in this century

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* Helyot, Hist. des ordres, tom. 3. p. 140.

to the cultivation of letters. Learning and philosophy found a sanctuary both among the Greeks and Latins, owing to the liberality of Emperors and to the taste and refinement of some of the Grecian and Roman Pontifs, particularly, Michael Anchialus, Patriarch of Constantinople, and Alexander III. Hence it was, that schools and academies were established in many of the principal cities of Europe, which in the succeeding age were erected into universities. These were afterwards still more richly endowed, whilst they improved upon the former plans of education, and in all the various branches of science.

A very unexpected event restored the knowledge and reputation of the ancient Roman law, which had gone into neglect and desuetude for ages past. The original manuscript of the famous Pandect of Justinian, was fortunately found in the ruins of Amalphi, when that city was taken by Lotharius II, *A. D.* 1137. The Emperor made a present of it to the people of Pisa, who had greatly contributed to the success of the siege. The valuable collection now discovered, diffused much juster notions of jurisprudence and legislation, than what had been hitherto received; its principles and maxims were universally admired, particular colleges were erected for the study of the Roman law, which soon multiplied over Europe, and a surprising revolution arose in the courts of justice, and with respect to the course of judicial process. Not only were different nations hitherto governed by distinct systems of law, but the several courts in the same country did adopt a body of laws peculiar to themselves. But the Roman law soon acquired such authority, as to supplant the most respectable institutions, even the Salic, Lombard, and

and Burgundian Codes, and generally prevailed in most of the European nations.

When the civil law came to be considered as a branch of academical learning, the Roman Pontiffs were desirous of obtaining the same privilege for the Canon law. This however it was not easy to accomplish. For the laws of the Church were so various, so irregular and indigested, and the collections hitherto made of them were so voluminous and inconsistent, that there was no methodical connected system, on which a plan of ecclesiastical polity could properly be founded. Hereupon, *Gratian*, a benedictine monk, a man of learning and industry, did compose and publish an epitome of Canon law, which he intitled,—A Reunion or Coalition of jarring Canons. This was intended in a particular manner for the use of schools and colleges; and accordingly most masters adopted it as the text, from which they used to prelect to the students. Some of the Romish communion have lavished many encomiums upon this abridgement of *Gratian*, whilst others acknowledge that it labours under many mistakes and defects. But notwithstanding this, it still maintains its ground, and considerable attention continues to be paid to it, in matters of an ecclesiastical nature.

Notwithstanding the prodigious number of convents which already abounded every where, and the licentiousness into which many of them ran headlong, so as to disgrace their religion and profession, yet we find many new monasteries founded for both sexes during the course of this century. We cannot but make particular mention of one that was established by Norbert, a German nobleman, and Archbishop of Magdeburg, about the year 1121. It was known by the name of the “Order of Premontré in Picardy.” It spread through

through most of the provinces in Europe with an astonishing rapidity, and from the most contemptible poverty at its first outset, rose to enormous opulence. They received so many donations from the liberal and superstitious, that in the space of thirty years from the time of their foundation, they could boast of one hundred abbies in France and Germany. In course of time, the order multiplied to such a wonderful degree, that they had monasteries throughout all christendom, amounting to 1000 abbies, 300 provostships, 500 nunneries, and an incredible number of priories, though all these are now greatly diminished.

Indeed the establishing of monastic societies, or becoming members of them, was then considered as a glorious achievement in religion, and as a sufficient atonement for all kind of crimes. Ignorance and wild superstition, or the most fanatical enthusiasm reigned to an extreme degree, whilst genuine Christianity was little understood. The *Scholastic* doctors gloried in the axioms and decisions of the ancient Dialecticians however intricate and metaphysical, or in the sophistry of false philosophy; while on the other hand, the Mystics made pretensions to a divine impulse, boasted of visions and celestial connections above the rank of humanity, and discarded the exercise of reason in matters of faith.

The adoration of the Virgin Mary, a vast veneration for departed saints, for images and relics, and outward ceremonies, usurped the place of that rational and devout worship, which was due to God, and the Saviour of the world. The Priests and Monks instead of checking, cherished these mistaken notions and dangerous errors, yea, with singular dexterity diverted them into their own great emolument. The Bishops imposed upon the credulity

credulity and superstition of the multitude, and instilled into them high notions of Episcopal power and authority. In order to raise money for the purposes of pleasure or grandeur, or for erecting magnificent churches, or for carrying on their schemes of ambition, they fleeced their flock by the most artful insinuations, particularly by exacting a certain sum for remitting penalties incurred by transgressors. This was granting indulgences, which proved a most fruitful source of opulence to the church of Rome. Thus they weighed iniquity in scales, and every species of sin had its proper punishment, at same time its stated price. The Abbots and Monks who were not qualified for such dispensations, carried about in pompous procession the carcases or relics of Saints and Martyrs, and allowed the gazing, giddy mob to touch or embrace them at the fixed rates which avarice demanded.

When the Roman Pontifs beheld the inferior clergy amassing vast treasures by the sale of indulgences, they at first limited the Bishops within certain restrictions, and afterwards assumed this gainful traffick to themselves. The Court of Rome became the only magazine, from whence were issued out indulgences, granting a partial or plenary remission of the temporal penalties, or ecclesiastical penances, which were annexed in the *Penitential* to each kind of crime. Nay, they took a bolder step, and with gross impiety pretended to remove or modify the punishments of a future state, when they were handsomely paid for it *.

To support and palliate such a scandalous practice, the Pontifs started a new doctrine, asserting that a rich Bank of Merit was lodged in their hands.

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* Morinus, De administratione Sacramenti Penitentiae, lib. 10.

This, they said, consisted of the pious and virtuous deeds, which saints had performed, beyond what was necessary for their own salvation, and which they had the privilege of dispensing as they saw meet, and of applying for the benefit of sinners, so as to deliver them from all punishment. This tenet, absurd as it is, gained ground, answered the ends for which it was devised, and is still maintained and justified, to the indelible reproach of the Church of Rome.

The shameful and daily increase of indulgences, the vices of the Clergy, the luxury and arrogance of Pontiffs and Bishops, the prevalence of superstition, and the enormous growth of rites and ceremonies, gave great offence to many pious persons. They perceived how inconsistent these things were with the sacred Scriptures, imperfect as their knowledge of these were, and how contrary to the pure and divine religion of Jesus. They wished and prayed for a reformation, but they themselves were unequal to the arduous enterprize. They were even tinctured with the prejudices of the times, their zeal was not always tempered with prudence; running precipitately from the abuses of superstition, and finding evident reason for condemning it, they sometimes degenerated into enthusiasm, carried their notions of austerity and reformation to an extravagant length, and thus gave rise to opinions, and engendered sects, which were not always most honourable to Christianity. Yet these feeble efforts were laudable and useful on many occasions; they in some degree preserved a juster sense of religion than what generally prevailed, and maintained a kind of opposition to the usurpations of Popery.

The Waldenses, however, deserve to be mentioned with particular respect. They pass under
different

different denominations, and their origin has been variously represented. They call themselves Valenses, because they reside as in a valley of tears, in the valleys of Piedmont. They are sometimes denominated Albigenes, from Alby a city in the southern part of France, where great numbers of them lived. From Lyons they obtained the name of Leonists, and from the purity of their life and doctrine, that of Cathari, as the name of Puritans was afterwards given to some who professed the same principles. Some are of opinion that the Valdenses or Vaudois existed in the seventh century, and that many who then groaned under and opposed the doctrines and usurpations of the Church of Rome, retreated into the peaceful vales of Piedmont, where they might be free from oppression and tyranny, and securely enjoy their religion and conscience *. Other historians consider Peter Waldus as the proper founder of this sect. He was an opulent merchant at Waldum a city of Lyons, a man of eminent piety, and of ardent zeal. About the year 1160, he employed *Stephanus de Evisa* a Priest, to translate from Latin into French the four Gospels, and several other books of Scripture. He soon perceived, how widely different these were from the doctrines and usages of the Church of Rome. Animated with a noble desire to dispel the darkness of superstition, and to diffuse the light of Divine truth, he relinquished his mercantile profession, distributed his estate among the poor, and commenced a preacher of the Gospel, in the year 1180. A multitude of well disposed persons entered into his views, adopted his religious sentiments, and formed a very considerable society. The ghostly rulers of the Church soon became jealous

* Vid. Dr. Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. vol. II. p. 452.

jealous of such a formidable antagonist, and endeavoured to undermine his credit, and oppose his progress. Their attempt however, proved ineffectual. His disciples multiplied apace, and such was the purity of their doctrine, the simplicity of their worship, and the innocence and sanctity of their behaviour, that they charmed all who beheld them with attention. Vast numbers were engaged to associate with them, and their reputation and influence daily increased. They formed themselves into religious assemblies, and established many of them in France and Lombardy. In a short time, they spread with an astonishing rapidity through many provinces of Europe, rose to great credit, power, and importance, so that in the succeeding century a dreadful war was waged against them by the Roman Pontiffs, the shocks of which they sustained with invincible fortitude.

They fought upon principle, and for what they clearly apprehended to be the truth of God. Their fundamental doctrine was, that the authority of Scripture was supreme, that this was the sole rule for judging in matters of Religion, and that whatever disagreed therewith was to be rejected.

They declared that the decrees of councils were only to be so far approved as they might agree with the word of God. They asserted that the reading and knowledge of Scripture was necessary for all, and the privilege of the Laity as well as of the Clergy. They only acknowledged as Sacraments, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and affirmed that both Priests and people ought to receive the last in both kinds. They condemned Transubstantiation, Masses, and Prayers for the dead, and the doctrine of Purgatory. They declared that the invocation and worship of departed saints was idolatry ; that the Church of Rome was
Antichrist,

Antichrist, and the Whore of Babylon; that the Pope and Bishops were the wolves of the Church of Christ, and were not to be obeyed; that the Pope had no primacy over the Churches, nor any title to the temporal sword. They maintained, that the true Church of Christ was that which heareth the sincere word of God, and observeth only the sacraments therein instituted. They condemned the celibacy of the Clergy, the monastic orders, the superstitious dedications of churches, pilgrimages, so many superfluous festivals, and those endless, vain rites and ceremonies, of which there was no mention in the Gospel.

Their own rules of practice were extremely rigid and austere, and their aim and intention was to reduce every thing in religion to the standard and discipline of the primitive Church.

There were indeed some distinctions among them, and those who lived in Italy were different in some opinions from their brethren in France and in other European kingdoms; but in general, they held almost the same opinions as those who are now called Reformers and Calvinists*.

The religious principles which they espoused, were directly opposite to Popery; and their zeal and numbers seemed to menace a Revolution fatal to the Church of Rome. The Roman Pontiffs took the alarm, published a kind of Crusade against them, and during the course of the thirteenth century carried on a most cruel persecution against all whom they branded with the name of Heretics.

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* Mezeray, the Historiographer of France, says,—Avoient à peu près les mêmes opinions que ceux qu' on nomme aujourd' huy Calvinistes. — *Abregé Chronol. Philippe Auguste*, p. 657.—Thuanus gives much the same character of the Waldenses. *Thuan. Hist. lib. 6. sect. 16.*

This did not however dismay or dispirit them. They multiplied in Italy, Spain, France, and Germany, and in a particular manner in Narbonne Gaul, where they met with powerful protection from Raymond VI. Earl of Tholouse, and several other personages of the first distinction. Innocent the III. observing with regret that the Bishops in those parts were too inclinable to shew lenity and forbearance, detached legates extraordinary, with ample powers, to extirpate what was then deemed heresy, and to take the most speedy and effectual methods for securing obedience to the Church. These spiritual champions executed their commission with barbarous fidelity, summoned before them all suspected persons, and inflicted capital punishment on such they thought guilty, and who could not be convinced by their arguments. The members of this new tribunal were distinguished in ordinary discourse by the appellation of Inquisitors, and from them the formidable Court of Inquisition derives its original.

This odious Judicature was soon erected in many provinces, and in most cities where it was known that any number of heretics resided. The Dominican Friars were singled out as proper persons to be promoted to a seat here, and who indeed exerted themselves with a lawless fury, in the discharge of their unchristian office. At first, however, in order to save appearances, and prevent too violent apprehensions, they proceeded against schismatics only, and with some decent regard to form, such as was usual in other courts of justice. But, in a short time, they drew within the vortex of their jurisdiction many other crimes than those of heresy; and, unskilled in jurisprudence, ignorant of judicial process, or determined to pitch upon such methods as would be most tremendous and decisive,

decisive, they modelled the tribunal of Inquisition after a new manner, repugnant to all the principles of equity, and inconsistent with justice or humanity.

By the rules of this Holy Office, as it is called, accused persons are shut up in frightful dungeons, obliged to accuse themselves, sometimes tortured till they do this; the charge and evidence are carried on in a clandestine manner, whilst the poor prisoners are never confronted with witnesses; and with infernal malignity they are sometimes accused, condemned, and executed in one day, without the privilege of appeal.

In order to give the greater sanction and authority to this newly erected tribunal, the Roman Pontif persuaded some of the European Princes, to take the Inquisitors under their special protection, to commit to the flames such who were condemned by them, and to enact the severest laws against all heretics; in consequence of which, many of all ranks fell victims to the most brutal and unrelenting cruelty.

These arbitrary and barbarous proceedings exasperated the people in several places, so that in the heat of indignation they slew some of the Inquisitors, whose bloody dispositions and outrages were no longer unknown. Innocent III. bent upon the destruction of those who opposed his authority, applied for assistance to Philip Augustus, King of France, and to the Nobles of that nation, that they might concur with him in extirpating heresy, by fire and sword. The Cistercian Monks were particularly zealous in the cause, and in name of the Pope published a crusade against the Heretics. These went by the general denomination of Albigenses, and against them a numerous army was raised *A. D.* 1209. An open war commenced, which

which continued for many years with various success, and which occasioned a large effusion of Christian blood.

So vigorous were the efforts that were made by the adversaries of the Church of Rome, that the Roman Pontif Honorius III. fearful of consequences, engaged, by the alluring promise of most ample indulgences, the King of France, Lewis VIII. to march in person against them. This he accordingly did at the head of a numerous army, and his example was followed by his son and successor Lewis the Saint. Raymond VII. of Tholouse, who headed the Albigenes, finding himself pressed on all hands, agreed to a treaty of peace in the year 1229, highly unfavourable for himself and for the whole cause. It is true the victorious party made an undue and illegal use of the advantages they gained, and this excited fresh ferments and renewed the war: But the Albigenes reaped no considerable benefit from it, and they lost their powerful patron and defender the unfortunate Earl of Tholouse, who, depressed by his misfortunes, died without male-issue in the year 1249.

Thus ended a civil war, in which Christians fought against Christians on a Religious account or pretext, the termination of which flattered the vanity and bigotry of the Church of Rome. It would make one shudder to describe the dreadful devastations of these times, and the many horrid cruelties and murders committed against innocent Christians, who stood up for the liberty of conscience and the purity of Religion. It is computed, that no less than one million of them were slain in France alone, in a kind of religious war, such as had been waged against the Saracens themselves.

selves. * At last, overpowered, they fled into Provence, and the neighbouring Alps of the French territory, and found a shelter for their doctrine in those places. Part withdrew into Calabria, and continued there a long while. Some passed into Germany, and fixed their residence in Bohemia, Poland and Livonia. Others, turning westward, obtained a happy refuge in Britain.

Whilst the inferior clergy of the Church of Rome were now sunk in ignorance, indolence and licentiousness, those of the sacerdotal order who were raised to rank and authority, instead of promoting projects of reformation, or becoming models themselves of piety and virtue, were wholly intent on schemes of ambition, committed crimes of the greatest atrocity in their pursuit of them, and acted the part rather of tyrants than of religious rulers. The history of the Popes in a long succession, is a glaring and melancholy demonstration of this. They asserted, with amazing effrontery, that the Bishops of Rome are the supreme Lords of the Universe, and that neither temporal Princes nor ecclesiastical Rulers have any lawful power in Church or State, but what they derive from them. In consequence of this pernicious pretension, they claimed the right of disposing of ecclesiastical benefices, and of conferring civil dominion, yea of dethroning Kings and Emperors according to their will. Such high and arrogant demands did meet indeed with opposition. Some considered the authority of councils as superior to that of the Pontiffs, and several European Princes, especially the Kings of England and France, asserted their privileges with spirit and dignity. Yet
such

* Mede in Apoc. p. 503. Thuani Præfat. ad Henric. IV. p. 7.

such was the power of superstition, so formidable were the Papal bulls of excommunication, and so various were the political connections or competitions that subsisted between different powers, that Papal usurpation, availing itself of these circumstances, obtained too fixed a footing in the world.

Hitherto the Bishops had enjoyed the privilege of nominating to smaller benefices. But now the Roman Pontifs claimed a power, not only of creating Bishops and Abbots, but of supplying subordinate offices in the Church. The Episcopal order warmly remonstrated against this invasion, and Lewis IX. King of France, took particular precautions against it. For, in the year 1268, he secured the rights of the Gallican Church, by that famous edict known by the name of the *Pragmatic Sanction*, which relates, in a special manner, to ecclesiastical preferments. This step, however, did not prevent the Roman Pontifs from prosecuting their designs, and Boniface VIII. maintained, in the most public manner, the supreme power and authority which he as Christ's viceregent had over the Church universal. The legates whom he and his successors deputed into different countries, spake in the same lordly stile, executed their commission with a plenitude of despotism, disposed of benefices for money, carried on an infamous traffic in relics and indulgences, excited tumults and factions, and behaved both in an insolent and profligate manner.

The Roman Pontifs as they grew in opulence, enlarged their ambitious views, exercised the most arbitrary government in the Church, and sought by all means to subject the Kings and Princes of the earth to their lordly dominion. Under Innocent III. and Nicolas III. their revenues greatly increased, partly from the events of war, and in a good measure also from the liberality of Princes and Potentates,

Potentates, devoted to the See of Rome, from motives of superstition or policy. Pope *Innocent* reduced the Prefect of Rome under his authority, who used to take an oath of allegiance to the Emperor, and made himself master of certain cities and territories, which he pretended had been an original part of St Peter's patrimony. Frederic II. confirmed to him and his successors the immense donation of the wealthy Matilda, and also made a grant of additional lands.

This assuming Pontif disposed of crowns and sceptres both in Asia and Europe. He gave a King to the Armenians, and promoted to regal rank *Primisslaus* Duke of Bohemia. He crowned with his own hands Peter II. of Arragon, and publicly saluted him at Rome with the title of King, because he had rendered his dominions tributary to the Church, whilst he sent the ensigns of royalty to the Duke of Bulgaria, by an extraordinary legate.

He raised Otho IV. to the imperial throne, in opposition to Philip Duke of Swabia. Again, he thundered out his excommunications against him, as being too refractory, and placed Frederic II. in his room.

King John of England, was treated by the imperious Pontif in the most ignominious manner. The English monarch had confirmed the election of John de Grey to the See of Canterbury, in opposition to Stephen Langton, whom the monks there had chosen and received by command of the Pope. The King was determined to chastise their insolence, and to banish them the kingdom. The exasperated Pontif laid the whole nation under an interdict, so that a stop was put to divine service; all the churches were shut, and none of the sacraments were administered except that of baptism.

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The interdict failing to produce the intended effect, the Prince was excommunicated, and a papal bull followed about three years after, absolving all subjects from their oath of allegiance to John, and commanding all persons to avoid him on pain of excommunication. Not satisfied with all this, the tyrannical Pontif assembled a council of Cardinals and Bishops, solemnly deposed King John, and declared the throne of England vacant. He next wrote to Philip Augustus King of France, empowering him to make a conquest of England, and to unite that kingdom forever to his own dominions. The French monarch entered into the views of the Roman Pontif which were so favourable for him, undertook to execute the sentence pronounced against John, and made vast preparations for the invasion of his kingdom. To render these more effectual, Innocent published a bull, exhorting all Christian Princes to second the efforts of the French King, and promising to such who embarked in the enterprize, the same privileges as were granted to the Crusaders in Palestine. The English monarch assembled an army, and put his kingdom into a posture of defence, resolving if possible to repel his audacious enemies.

In this crisis of affairs, Pandulf, the Pope's legate arrives at *Dover*. There he found King John, and in the most artful manner exaggerated the grand armaments that were forming against him, and persuaded him that the only method for securing himself, was by submitting entirely to the Roman See. John, involved in perplexity, distrustful of his nobles, suspicious of his troops, and doubtful of the event, meanly resigned his very crown into the hands of the legate, who kept it for five days, and from whom he received it again as a present, at same time swearing fealty to the See of Rome

Rome as a vassal, and rendering his dominions feudatory to it. He became bound to pay an annual tribute of 700 marks for England, and 300 marks for Ireland, in acknowledgment of the Pope's supremacy; and further consented, that if he, or any of his successors, should fail in the submission then stipulated, such should forfeit all title to the English throne. Such the abject spirit of the English monarch! Such the unbounded arrogance of the Roman Pontif!

Indeed the Popes of Rome carried matters with a high hand, particularly Nicolas IV, and Boniface VIII, whose extravagant claims and imperious transactions appear almost incredible. They claimed and exercised an absolute power both in spirituals and temporals, affrighted kingdoms and countries with the thunder of their bulls, with their anathemas, excommunications, and interdicts; they summoned Princes and Sovereigns to their tribunals, deposed Kings and Emperors at pleasure. Thus they proved the scourges of mankind, occasioned numberless contests and perpetual wars, whilst with insatiable ambition they sought to subject the whole world to their ghostly empire, and to maintain the Papal hierarchy and tyranny. From these violent measures sprang, in a particular manner, the two famous factions, called Guelphs and Ghibelines, the first espousing the cause of the Pontiffs, and the latter that of the Emperors, which involved all the Italian states in the most unhappy dissensions, and spread tumult and discord far and near.

The Popes of Rome still continued to keep in sight the Crusades in Palestine, as from these Asiatic wars they derived many fine opportunities, for augmenting their opulence and authority. They and their legates endeavoured every where to

found the charge, and to revive the languishing zeal of the European Princes in this religious cause. At length a considerable number of the French nobility, entered into an alliance with the republic of Venice, who raised their respective forces, and set sail for the east. However, instead of steering their course directly for the Holy Land, they proceeded to Constantinople, and took that city by storm in the year 1203.

They at first restored Isaac Angelus to the imperial throne, and after that he and his son Alexius were put to death by Alexius Ducas, the Crusaders made themselves masters a second time of the imperial city, and created Baldwin Count of Flanders, Emperor of the Greeks. They on the contrary, elected Theodore Lascaris of their own nation, in opposition to the Latin Emperor: And from this period two Emperors ruled in the Grecian state, till the year 1261.

Another religious expedition was undertaken under the Pontificate of Honorius III. by the confederate forces of Italy and Germany. Andrew, King of Hungary, Leopold, Duke of Austria, Lewis, Duke of Bavaria, and various other Princes put themselves at the head of this enterprize.

In the year 1220 they became masters of Damietta, one of the strongest cities in Egypt, and were flushed with sanguine hopes of further success. But these were soon blasted by the destruction of their fleet, the want of provisions, and the loss of their late conquest.

Another grand armament was formed, which drew the attention of Europe, that was to be under the command of the Emperor Frederic II. Motives of interest as well as principles of superstition concurred to animate his zeal and invigorate his measures. He had married Iolanda daughter of the
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the Count of Brienne, King of Jerusalem, and by his alliance that kingdom was to devolve to him. However, so it was that various circumstances postponed the Emperor's expedition for a considerable space of time. Gregory IX. was so incensed at the long delay, that in an haughty humour he excommunicated him. The Emperor at last set forward for Palestine in the year 1228; and thereupon the insidious and perfidious Pontif made war against him in Apulia, and used his utmost endeavours to arm the European Princes against him.

Frederic, instead of pushing the war with vigour, concluded a treaty of peace with the Sultan of Egypt in the year 1229. Among other articles, he stipulated, that he should be put in possession of the city and kingdom of Jerusalem. Accordingly he made a triumphant entry into the holy city, and with his own hands placed the crown upon his head, amidst the acclamations of the victorious Christians. Afterwards, he returned immediately into Europe, to check the progress of the ambitious Pontif, and to quell the commotions which he had excited in his absence. In this he likewise proved successful. He defeated the Papal army, recovered the places he had lost in Italy and Sicily, made peace with the Pope, and obtained from him an open and solemn absolution.

Various other expeditions were set on foot, from time to time, against the Mahometan infidels.

In the year 1239, Theobald VI. Count of Champagne and King of *Navarre*, along with several French and German Princes, set out for Palestine.

The year following, Richard Earl of Cornwall, and brother to Henry III. King of England, likewise embarked. But their successes did not answer expectations, a considerable body of Christians

stians were defeated at Gaza, the Emperor's ambassadors confirmed the treaty their master had made, on all which accounts a truce was concluded on the best conditions the circumstances of affairs could procure.

Notwithstanding the daily decline of the Christian interests in the east, yet this did not discourage Lewis IX. King of France, from attempting to recover them. Accordingly, in the year 1248, he embarked with a formidable army for Egypt, proposing to penetrate from thence into Syria and Palestine. Damietta, the first city in Egypt, submitted to his victorious arms, and he obtained many advantages at first, which seemed to promise well. But the scene was soon reversed; the horrors of pestilence and famine overspread the royal army, the King's brother the Earl of Artois, a valiant commander, was slain in an engagement; and within a few days after, the French Monarch, two other brothers, and the greatest part of the army, were made prisoners of war, in a bloody battle that had been fought with singular valour and obstinacy. An immense ransom was paid for the French Monarch, of 500,000 livres, which, at this time, would amount to about L. 190,000 Sterling. Upon this, the King returned to France in the year 1254, with a handful of troops; and of 2800 illustrious Knights who accompanied him into Palestine, there now remained only one hundred.

Lewis was a Prince of invincible fortitude and magnanimity, whom no misfortunes could depress, he was extremely religious according to the taste of the times, and zealous to a high degree for the extinction of infidels. He therefore embarked in another expedition, carried with him a numerous army, and was attended with a splendid retinue of Nobles.

Nobles. He set sail for Africa with an intention of first converting the Mahometans in that part of the world, and of enriching himself by his conquests there, that so he might prosecute the war in Asia with more vigour and success. Upon his arrival on the African coast, he gained several advantages, which appeared to prognosticate future victories, as to which, however, he was fatally disappointed. A pestilential disease broke out in his fleet and army, destroyed the greatest part of both, and at last cut off the unfortunate monarch in the year 1270. He was the last of the European Princes that engaged in these sacred expeditions. Their eyes were at last opened to see the romantic folly and impropriety of them; they began to reflect on the vast expence and complicated difficulties which attended them, and on that endless train of calamities which they had occasioned. Dissentions and jealousies continually reigned in the Christian armies: The profligate and cruel conduct of many who pretended to be the champions of the Cross, exasperated the Infidels, and some signal successes which these had obtained, and many other circumstances, made the Latin empire visibly decline in the east. The Roman Pontifs employed their utmost skill and influence to support their tottering interest; but this was entirely overthrown in the year 1291, after an immense profusion of blood and treasure, during the course of two centuries; and from that period to the present time, Christian Powers and Princes have had no footing in *Palestine*.

Almost all the monastic orders in the church of Rome had degenerated from their original institution; and, instead of displaying in their lives and manners that sanctity and contempt of the world to which they were led by their profession, or that might have been expected from it, they exhibited
to

to public view the most offensive examples of vice and licentiousness. The many heretical sects which sprang up, availed themselves of this shameful behaviour, affected the greatest austerity and mortification, became thereby extremely popular, and drew after them a vast number of followers. In order to obstruct their progress, and to recover the sinking credit of the monastic state, it was judged proper, by the ecclesiastical rulers in this century, to encourage certain religious societies, who might by the strictness of their discipline, and the regularity of their conduct attract the veneration of mankind, create confidence, and be of real service in supporting the Papal dominion. The Mendicant or Begging Friars, surpassed all the rest in the purity of their morals, and in the sanctimonious appearance which they assumed. According to the tenor of their institution, they were to have no fixed revenues or possessions, and to depend on the voluntary alms and oblations of the people. The Roman Pontiffs, with a view to render them perfectly subservient to their interests, and the proper tools and engines of policy, placed all such who took on them a vow of poverty, under their own peculiar protection, and conferred upon them a multiplicity of favours and privileges. When this was observed, their number grew to an enormous degree, swarms of them sprang up through all the provinces in Europe, so that they became an intolerable burden both to Church and State.

Upon this, Gregory X. assembled a general council at Lyons, in the year 1272, reduced the extravagant multitude of Mendicants to four societies, denominated Franciscans, Dominicans, the Carmelites, and Hermits of St Augustin.

These four orders had the liberty of travelling wheresoever they pleased, of conversing with people of every rank, and of instructing the youth. By
their

their sanctimonious looks and demure deportment, they gained greatly upon the multitude, who beheld them with unusual respect, and in process of time they rose to a high degree of importance. The Roman Pontifs reposed singular trust and confidence in them, and employed them in matters of the highest moment, not only of a spiritual but political nature.

But the Dominicans and Franciscans outshone their other brethren to a high degree, and rendered themselves famous in the world. These two fraternities did not confine themselves within the duties of their sacred profession. Some of them taught in universities, and had the opportunity of moulding the principles and dispositions of the rising generation to an entire devotedness to the See of Rome. Others were promoted to the first stations in the Church; and many were advanced to civil preferments, entrusted with the secrets of the court and cabinet, with levying taxes, forming alliances, and concluding of treaties.

During the course of near three centuries, they governed church and state with a commanding sway, and were, before the Reformation, what the Jesuits have been since that happy æra, the great props and pillars of the Papal Hierarchy, the soul and spring of the most important measures, and the capital directors of almost every religious or political movement.

In whatever capacity they acted, they emblazoned the majesty and maintained the prerogatives of the Pontifs, were thoroughly devoted to the interests of the See of Rome, most industrious to advance her grandeur and opulence, and from thence they derived reciprocal support and influence.

In order to indemnify them for their voluntary humility, the Roman Pontifs lavished upon these orders

ders many marks of distinguished regard, and particularly the privilege of hearing confession, and dispensing absolution, without licence from the Bishop, as also of granting indulgences, which proved an inexhaustible source of opulence. This partial procedure was a manifest encroachment upon the ancient discipline of the Church, served to excite envy among the other ecclesiastical orders, and occasioned warm disputes between the Episcopal and Mendicant bodies.

These jarrings and dissensions grew so violent, as sometimes to produce dreadful disorders and tumults in many countries, and even in Rome itself, under the eye of the Pontif.

The Dominicans and Franciscans, elated with their prosperity, behaved with great arrogance upon many occasions, and treated other orders in the Church with supercilious contempt. They boldly pretended to inspiration itself, asserted that they alone knew the true method of salvation, vaunted of the superior efficacy of their indulgences, and of their transcendent interest in the court of heaven.

They at length arrived to such a height of ambition, as to claim powers and privileges inconsistent with all subordination, and that struck at the supreme jurisdiction of the Pontifs themselves. They afterwards fell into violent contests with one another, each order claiming the precedency, and that with mutual invective and animosity. To crown all, the Franciscans split into various factions among themselves concerning the rules of their order, and certain points of religion, which kindled a flame and spread disturbances, which proved highly prejudicial to the repose and security of the Romish church*.

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* Dr Mosheim's *Eccles. Hist.* vol. III. p. 62. &c.

Among the school-divines of this century, the Dominican and Franciscan Monks held the most considerable place; and they, by their jargon and subtilty, their metaphysical distinctions, and endless quibbling, shed darkness and intricacy over the sacred truths of religion, and disguised its native simplicity. The Latin Pontifs were far from being offended at this; nay, they were well pleased to see the multitude kept in ignorance, so that they might enjoy the fairer opportunity for augmenting their power, and for supporting their system of superstition. It is therefore the less surprizing to find fanatical and ridiculous sects springing up, that plainly indicate the false taste of religion which prevailed in those unhappy times, and which shew what flights of frenzy men can reach, when actuated by the force of Enthusiasm, and a blind zeal for mistaken devotion.

I might mention that whimsical sect called *Whippers*, or *Flagellantes*, who appeared in Italy *A. D.* 1260, and who soon multiplied in many other countries of Europe. They thought the only method of appeasing the Deity was, by committing acts of cruelty upon themselves. They therefore ran from one place to another like a distracted multitude, both through cities and desarts, with whips and scourges in their hands, lashing their naked bodies with sudden severity. Yet this wild behaviour was construed into Christian mortification and sanctity, and was beheld with a stupid admiration by the gazing and undiscerning populace.

Another enthusiastical tribe were distinguished by the title of *Brethren and Sisters of the free Spirit*. They spread through Italy, France and Germany, and seduced multitudes of both sexes, by the pretended refinement of their notions and manners. They were called *Beghards* by the Germans and

Flemish, and in France they got the appellation of Beghines and Turlupins. They adopted a high, fantastical system of mystic theology, conjoined with false principles of Pantheistical philosophy. They maintained that the soul of man was a real portion or particle of Deity, possessing divine perfections, and equal to the Son of God himself. They boasted of a peculiar liberty which they had obtained through the Spirit, and of a total exemption from the obligations of the law. They condemned all kind of labour and industry, as what retarded the heaven-born mind in its progress towards perfection. They inculcated an entire abstraction from the world, and a continued contemplation, till the soul was absorbed in the bosom of divinity. They forbid the use of all external ordinances in religion, held nocturnal assemblies remote from public view, and behaved without regard to the decency and order of common life. Both men and women cloathed themselves in a singular and whimsical manner, and begged their bread from house to house, shouting and shrieking in a barbarous tone, with an air and aspect of superstitious delirium. Both Emperors and Popes thought proper to interpose their authority, for suppressing so pernicious a society; and many were committed to the flames by the court of Inquisitors*.

Various other heretical sects appeared during this century, which opposed the received system of religion, and indeed the evident doctrines of the gospel, and advanced notions of a dangerous tendency.

Besides

* Those who desire a further account of the Beghards, which I have touched but transiently, may receive it in an ample manner from Dr Mosheim, and his judicious and elegant Translator Dr Maclain, vol. III. p. 122. 123. &c. octavo Edition, to whose representations of historical facts I pay great regard.

Part III. *Ecclesiastical History, &c.*

Besides other methods taken to discountenance extirpate them, a council of Bishops was solemnly assembled at Paris, to deliberate upon the growing evil; and they, considering the philosophy of Aristotle as the fountain or occasion of this inundation of heresy, thought fit to prohibit the reading the books wrote by that Grecian sage, and all prelecting upon them in public or private.

Innocent III. was extremely intent on promoting Papal power and superstition, and on establishing such articles of faith, such modes of discipline, and such kind of rites and ceremonies as were calculated to advance the credit of the Clergy, and the grandeur and opulence of the Church.

He prescribed by law, and placed among duties of indispensable obligation that of Auricular Confession. By this a man is bound not merely to make a general acknowledgment of his faults to a Priest, but to enumerate all his sins in a particular detail. Thus do the father-confessors gain a victorious ascendancy over the conscience and honour of mankind, screw themselves into the history of families, and obtain a mastery and influence on some occasions irresistible.

This Pope also got the strange doctrine of Transubstantiation established by law, in all its extent of absurdity. It was no longer left to the option of any worshipper to understand or explain the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, as he himself was disposed, but his real presence, and the conversion of the sacred elements into the body and blood of the Lord, was universally imposed as an article of faith; as if a trial of skill was to be made, to see how far the credulity and stupidity of mankind would go. To make it pass more easily among the deluded multitude, the celebration of Mass was accompanied with great pomp and magnificence, and

a train of mysterious ceremonies. That apartment of Church, in which was lodged the consecrated, or rather the deified bread, was decorated with all imaginable splendor: It was exhibited with all the silence and solemnity of devotion; all must kneel in lowly adoration before it. It was carried through the streets in triumphant procession, under a rich canopy of state, supported by Priests in their sacerdotal vestments, attended with illuminations, ringing of bells, and chanting of anthems. And even an annual festival was instituted in honour of the holy sacrament, with a view to certify and aggrandize the doctrine of the real and corporeal presence of Christ.

Indeed superstitious rites and ceremonies of every kind were multiplied without bounds, as if the whole of religion consisted in external show and parade. This was carried to such a pitch of frenzy, that in a theatrical manner, and chiefly at the observation of religious festivals, the miraculous dispensations of providence, and certain events in the Christian history, were represented on a stage. Such tragic-comical spectacles could not but degrade the dignity of religion; and however suitable they might be to the vitiated taste of the times, they must appear to a serious unprejudiced mind, a licentious prostitution of sacred mysteries.

Boniface VIII. was the first who instituted the famous year of Jubilee at Rome *A. D.* 1299. It is celebrated with the highest grandeur and magnificence, indulgences are then liberally dispensed, and a plenary pardon of sin is granted to those who make confession of their offences, and who visit as penitent pilgrims, the holy churches of St Peter and St Paul at Rome.

These jubilees were to be observed every hundredth year, but when the Roman Pontiffs found,
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from agreeable experience, that they greatly augmented the dignity and revenues of the Church, and that they drew an amazing multitude of people to the seat of Papal power and superstition, from which various advantages might be derived, they shortened the period, and ordained the same to be celebrated every fiftieth year, and afterwards once every twenty-five years.

Some have traced them as an evident imitation of the famous *secular games* *, that had been solemnized in Pagan Rome, with such remarkable pomp and pageantry. But indeed a vast many more of the Romish rites and observances, are manifestly borrowed from the superstitious tenets and usages of Heathenism, to the discredit of Christianity, whose genuine lustre and sublimity are thereby tarnished and debased.

In the *fourteenth* century, various and vigorous attempts were made by the Roman Pontiffs to renew the Crusade against the Saracens and Turks in Palestine. All the arts of persuasion were employed to engage the European Princes to embark afresh in this holy war, for the honour of their religion, and for the extirpation of Mahometan Infidels who opposed it. Immense sums were raised with this view, indulgences plentifully distributed, ample promises made, a fleet was equipt by the Pope, John XXII. in the year 1309, an army was raised by Philip de Valois, King of France, in the year 1330, and a formidable one assembled *A. D.* 1363 by John the French Monarch, who was to command it in person. Yet notwithstanding all these grand preparations, various unfavourable events interveened to prevent execution, and all the projects for a religious expedition proved abortive and died away,

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* Lettres de M. Chais sur les Jubiles, tom. 1. p. 53, 54, &c.

In this century there was scarce any country in Europe that was not illuminated more or less with the light of the gospel. *Lithuania* was among the last which embraced the Christian faith, in the year 1386, when *Jagello*, Duke of that province, was baptized, renounced Heathen idolatry, and made all his subjects follow his pious example. The Teutonic Knights and Crusaders, finding no scene of action opened in Palestine, exerted their force in another quarter, and by fire and sword extirpated any remains of Paganism that were lurking in *Livonia* and *Prussia*.

The annals of the Church inform us, that great numbers of the Jewish nation were converted about this period. Many heinous accusations had been brought against them, as guilty of atrocious crimes, and affronting the established religion, which armed magistrates, priests, and people for the destruction of the Jews. The most violent persecutions were raised against that unhappy people in many places, particularly in France and Germany, so that multitudes either over-awed by fear, or by authority, or from maturer consideration which their sufferings produced, laid aside their bigotry and prejudices, and became obedient unto the faith.

The missionaries that had been formerly sent into China and Tartary, met with considerable success, and planted many Christian churches in these vast empires.

About the beginning of this century, Clement V. erected Cambalu, the same with Peking, the capital of the Chinese empire, into an archbishopric. Succeeding Pontiffs supplied these countries with Bishops and Doctors from time to time, so that the Christian religion flourished there for a considerable space, and was even propagated to the most northern provinces of Asia.

About

About the end of this century, Tamerlane appeared, who made a most conspicuous figure in the world. He was descended from Princes who reigned in the western parts of Tartary, and became a formidable and successful warrior. His victorious arms subdued many of the richest provinces in Asia, and his fame and renown for war spread far and near through the world. Manuel, the Grecian Emperor, and other Christian Princes, who had been over-run and oppressed by Bajazet the Fourth King of the Turks, applied to *Tamerlane* for his powerful succour. He thereupon entered into the Lesser Asia, with an army of 800,000 men, obtained a compleat victory in a bloody battle fought near Mount Stella, and took Bajazet prisoner, who ended his days in miserable captivity.

After this, he made himself master of all Tartary, Persia, and a great part of India. He lived till he was near 90 years of age, and the Great Moguls in the East Indies are descended from him. This illustrious Prince embraced the doctrine of Mahomet; but notwithstanding this, he shewed for some time considerable favour to Christians, and to men of learning. But at last the principles of his religion, so adverse to those of Christianity, prevailed over him, and made him treat all who professed the Gospel with unrelenting cruelty. This gave a forcible check to its progress, and the religion of Jesus gradually lost ground among the Chinese, Tartars, and Moguls, till it seemed to be almost wholly extirpated.

We must now observe, that the ambition and tyranny of the Roman Pontiffs, which had risen to an enormous height, received in this period a considerable check and mortification. This was occasioned by a violent contest which subsisted between Boniface VIII. and Philip the Fair, King of France.

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That Pope was a man of an arrogant, assuming, and enterprizing spirit, and aimed at absolute despotism both in Church and State. To shew his authority both in spirituals and temporals, he used to make his appearance upon public occasions, sometimes in his Pontifical habit, at other times in Imperial robes, and took this for his motto, *Ecce Duo Gladii*. The French Monarch was high-spirited, firm, and intrepid, and endeavoured to convince the Princes of Europe that it was not impossible to give some check to the aspiring designs of the See of Rome.

Boniface was highly dissatisfied with the alliance which Philip had concluded with the Emperor, and used every artifice to get it dissolved. He also demanded that the Earl of *Flanders* and his children, who had rendered themselves obnoxious to his Holiness, should be delivered into his hands. All propositions with respect to both these points were, however, perfectly disregarded by the French King. He likewise accused and imprisoned the Bishop of Pamiers, a creature and tool of the Pope, as guilty of monopolies, and exciting sedition. The Roman Pontif was hereupon much exasperated, and wrote letters to Philip in the most insolent strain, asserting in the boldest manner, supreme dominion over all Princes and people. He published a bull, declaring that Christ had granted an unlimited power to his Church, that all mankind were subjected to the Bishops of Rome; and that such who denied this were to be reputed Heretics, and incapable of salvation. In a brief addressed to the King, he says, “ We would have your Majesty to know, that you
“ are subject to us in all things both spiritual and
“ temporal.”

The French Monarch ordered these bulls and briefs to be burnt, and assembled the states of his realm,

realm, who protested against the Pope's pretensions in civil matters. They likewise drew up an answer to Boniface in terms of high contempt, and expressed thus: "Philip, by the grace of God, King of the Franks, to *Boniface*, who sets up for Sovereign Pontif, little or no health. Be it known to your Great Extravagance, that we are not subject to any person whatsoever, as to what regards temporals; and that collation to ecclesiastical benefices belong to us by royal right."

Philip also ordered William de Nogeret, a noted lawyer, to draw out a charge against the Pope for a great many crimes, particularly Heresy and Simony, and demanded that a general Council should be convened in order to depose him from the Pontificate. Boniface, on the other hand, thundered out a bull of excommunication against the King and all his adherents.

In mean time, Nogeret was detached into Italy, to kindle a sedition, to seize on the Pope's person, and to convey him to Lyons, where Philip proposed to assemble a Council. This famous and active lawyer, formed an alliance with the powerful house of the *Colonnas*, then at enmity with his Holiness, levied an army, and made Boniface prisoner. He treated him with the highest indignity, and vented his rage to such a degree, as to give him a blow with an iron gauntlet. The inhabitants of *Anagni*, moved by pity and superstition, rescued the unfortunate Pontif, and conducted him to Rome, where he soon ended his days, overwhelmed with grief and indignation.

His successor, Benedict XI. repealed the sentence of excommunication which stood against the King, but could not be persuaded to absolve Nogeret. But upon his death, Philip formed a scheme for promoting a French Prelate to the Pontificate, in

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whom he might repose entire confidence. Accordingly *Bertrand de Got*, Archbishop of Bourdeaux, was elected to the See of Rome *A. D.* 1305, who assumed the name of Clement V.

This was an important victory obtained by the French King, which he improved to great advantage. Through his intrigue and persuasion, he prevailed on Clement to remain in France, and to remove the Papal residence from Rome to Avignon, where it continued for 70 years, which the Italians call, by way of sneer, the Babylonish captivity.

This event proved extremely prejudicial to the interest of the Romish church. The Gallic Popes were not beheld with the same veneration as those of Rome. During their distance from the proper seat of government, innumerable factions sprang up which opposed their authority; the Gibellines, their old inveterate foes, gathered strength, tumults and civil wars prevailed in Rome and Italy. The territories, which constituted St Peter's patrimony, were ravaged, the decrees and bulls of the Holy Father were treated with irreverence both by word and writing, and a spirit of opposition began to shew itself from this date, in many parts of Europe. Besides, the French Pontiffs, receiving very small revenues from their dominions in Italy, had recourse to many expedients of an oppressive nature, in order to supply the Apostolic treasury. The sale of indulgences and of benefices was increased, new taxes and tributes were devised, *reserves*, *provisions*, and *expectatives*, as they were termed, and other avaricious impositions, were multiplied, which created general disgust, and alienated the minds of many from the church of Rome.

It was Gregory II. who took the resolution of quelling, if possible, the disorders and tumults which
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raged in Rome and Italy, and of recovering the cities and provinces which had been taken from the Roman See. With this view he transferred the Pontifical seat from Avignon to Rome *A. D.* 1376. He found matters in very great confusion, did not escape many personal insults, and remarked with regret the low ebb to which Papal Majesty was reduced. But amidst schemes of restoration at Rome, and some inclinations of returning to France, he was carried off by death in the year 1378.

Hereupon the College of Cardinals assembled in order to chuse a successor. The people of Rome, afraid least a Frenchman should be advanced to the Papal dignity, and sollicitous to have a Roman or Italian preferred, rose in a tumultuous manner, surrounded the Conclave, cried out with one voice, *Romano lo volemo Papa*; and threatened to break open the doors, and cut the Cardinals to pieces, except they gratified their demands. Alarmed at such an uproar, and suspicious of consequences, the electors promoted to the Popedom *Bartolomeo Pregnano*, Archbishop of *Bari*, and a native of Naples, who took the name of Urban VI.

No sooner was he invested with his new title and dignity, than he behaved so impolitically, and with such insufferable pride, as to create general dislike, especially among the leading Cardinals. They therefore retired to Fondi, and thought proper to declare the former election null as matter of force, and raised to the Pontificate Robert Count of Geneva, who assumed the designation of Clement VII. Thus Christendom beheld two Popes at one time, each claiming sovereignty and supremacy; and which was the true one, became a question of much controversy and dubiety.

Urban continued at Rome, but the castle of St Angelo held out for Clement. The Romans
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however laid siege to it, after some time made themselves masters of the same, and then demolished it. Clement resided at Avignon, and his cause was espoused in France, Spain, Scotland, Lorrain, Savoy, Sicily and Naples. On the other hand, Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, Prussia, Sweden, Denmark and Norway, acknowledged the authority of Urban, as also most of the cities in Tuscany and Lombardy. In England, the deputies sent by the two Competitors were heard in Parliament, and thereupon the election and right of Urban were solemnly recognized.

Thus the union of the Latin church under one supreme head, was dissolved by this great western schism. Violent animosities, factions, tumults and wars sprang from hence, which embroiled Europe for half a century, and occasioned great distress and calamity. The interests of real religion were neglected, amidst the jarring of parties, and the claims of ambition. The Clergy, inflamed with political resentments, divided in opinion, and earnestly contending about the rightful Vicar of Christ, forgot all zeal for his Religion, and sank into deeper corruption. And the people saw, with astonishment and with all the pangs of superstitious hesitation and uncertainty, their ghostly rulers, from whom they were taught to look for salvation, miserably divided among themselves, and thundering out anathemas against one another, whilst two or three different Popes at one time claimed obedience.

Nevertheless, even from these scenes of confusion, some good consequences arose, which, in the final issue, proved propitious both to civil and religious liberty.

The grandeur and authority of the Roman Pontiffs underwent a dark eclipse, a spirit of enquiry and

and opposition was awakened, Princes and Potentates became judges and umpires to decide the rights of Papacy, and people were led to despise the pretences of religion in those who only contended for earthly dominion, and to imagine that the Church of Christ might make a shift to subsist by itself, under the care of Providence, without the lordly sway and supremacy of a visible Head.

Urban died in the year 1389, and Clement in the year 1394, but neither of these events put a period to the partition of the Pontificate. The Italian Cardinals who were attached to the first, elected a Neapolitan to the See of Rome, called Boniface IX; whilst the French Cardinals advanced a Spaniard to the Pontificate, known by the name of Benedict XIII. Various attempts were made for reconciling differences, and putting an end to so formidable a schism, which threatened destruction to the Church. Emperors, Princes, and Prelates united their councils, and projected various schemes with this salutary and pacific view.

The method of Cession was generally judged the most plausible; but each Pontif obstinately refused to resign the Papal chair, and all measures of accommodation proved abortive, which produced many disagreeable effects. The Gallican church thereupon held a Council at Paris in the year 1397, and renounced all subjection to both Popes, which withdrawalment was approved by the King, and published throughout France.

It was about the year 1360, that *John Wickliff*, Rector of Lutterworth, and Professor of Divinity at Oxford, rendered himself famous, and filled not only England, but almost all Europe with his doctrine. He was a Doctor of great parts and penetration, and could not but openly condemn, both in preaching and writing, the tyranny and superstition

stitution of the Church of Rome. He opposed with great zeal the errors of Transubstantiation, the adoration of the Host, the Seven Sacraments, Prayers for the dead, a state of Purgatory, the Worship of saints and images, and all the principal corruptions and superstitions of the times. He inveighed bitterly against the vicious lives of the Monks and Clergy, and was a great enemy to all the Mendicant Friars. In the warmest manner he recommended to the laity the perusal and study of the Holy Scriptures, and translated them into the English language.

Great numbers of people embraced his opinions, he was powerfully supported by persons of eminent distinction; the university of Oxford patronized him, and his books were read in their public schools and colleges, till they were condemned and prohibited by the Council of Constance in the next century.

Yet did not he himself escape prosecution and trouble. A council was held at London, *A. D.* 1377, to which he was summoned by *Simon Sudbury* Archbishop of Canterbury.

Wickliff went there, accompanied with the Duke of Lancaster, who at that time had the greatest share in the government of the kingdom. He happily escaped the danger that threatened him, defended himself, and was absolved.

But another process was revived against him in the year 1385. Two Councils were convened at London and Oxford, and there he did not meet with so favourable a fate. The opinions which he taught were condemned as heretical and erroneous, yet he himself retired safely to Lutterworth, and died in peace, *A. D.* 1387.

But his doctrines did not die with him;—he left many followers, and these multiplied to a great degree,

degree, both at home and abroad, who were remarkable for their zeal and fidelity, many of whom witnessed a good confession even unto death.

They went by the name of Wickliffites, and sometimes of Lollards, by way of profane contempt, alluding to the German etymology of that word, which denotes a person who is continually praising God, or singing hymns to his honour. Others would derive this appellation from one Walter Lollard who preached in Germany about the year 1315 against the authority of the Pope, the Intercession of saints, the Mass, extreme Unction, as well as against other ceremonies and superstitions of the Church of Rome, and who was burned alive at *Cologne*, *A. D.* 1322 *.

It is acknowledged by those who are well versed in the history of these times, that science and learning in general, as also the knowledge of real religion, were reduced to a low ebb. Scholastic theology and mysticism were predominant in their respective extremes. Logical doctors or philosophical divines, stood in array against those of the *Biblical Party*, and both were continually engaged in a series of mutual controversy.

Many, both of the Greeks and Latins, gave into *Aristotelian* notions, and followed the rules of the Peripatetics in expounding the doctrines of Religion. They wrested the Sacred Writings, in order to accommodate them to their own meaning, and cloathed them with a mysterious, abstract air, remote from vulgar views. They delighted in abstruse and metaphysical argumentation, which frequently degenerated into sophistry, and presumptuously

* For a full and particular account of the Lollards, I refer the curious Reader to Dr Mosheim's *Eccles. Hist. Eng.* by Dr Maclain, vol. III. p. 184, 185, &c.

tuously brought Divine Revelation to the test and tribunal of human philosophy. The Dominicans and Franciscans were forward in this list, took great freedom in all their disputations, explained Scripture with a boundless latitude, and thereupon often ran into foolish and dangerous opinions. These philosophical theologians likewise disagreed among themselves, which gave rise to two famous sects, the *Scotists* and *Thomists*, which subsist to this day, the one named from John Duns Scotus an Englishman, and of the Franciscan order; the other from Thomas Aquinas, whose tenets were warmly espoused by the Dominicans. There are many different points about which they contend, but in a more peculiar manner, concerning the nature and extent of the Divine operation upon the human mind, the will of man, the measure of supernatural grace that is necessary to salvation, the unity or personal identity of man, and the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary.

The Mystics, whilst they discarded human wisdom and philosophy, were sometimes disrespectful to Scripture itself, and seemed to substitute in room of the written Word, miraculous impulses of the Spirit, Platonic notions and extatic transports. Yet there were some among them of eminent piety and of more moderation, who excelled in Biblical learning, and drew from the sacred Writings, as a pure perennial fountain, all their sublime sentiments of devotion and virtue. Others again, who were disowned by this more rational party, ran into all the frenzy of fanaticism, indulged to enthusiastic flights and visions, and rambled from place to place with gloomy looks and macerated bodies, and retailed opinions inconsistent with Christianity or humanity.

A-kin

A-kin to these were the Quietists, a sect which very much infested the Greek church. These enjoined a total abstraction from the world, an intense course of contemplation, and boasted of a Divine illumination, which, in an extraordinary manner, diffused serenity and joy through the soul. They, in order to obtain this, were accustomed to sit in solitude, steady and pensive, with their eyes fixed immoveably on some particular object. Thereupon they pretended that an internal radiant light beamed upon them, which they called the Glory of God, and the splendor with which Christ shone forth, at his transfiguration upon the Mount.

Very different from this *still* and contemplative sect, was that of the Dancers, which arose in the year 1373 at Aix-la-Chapelle, and which from thence was disseminated through many places in Flanders.

Both sexes among them were so ridiculous, as to imagine dancing a part of devotion, or as preparatory to it. And in this exercise they continued so long, and with such violent agitation, till, quite exhausted and breathless, they dropped into a fainting fit. During this interval, they were favoured, as they said, with extraordinary visions.

Such the meanness or madness of men, when actuated by false principles and enthusiastical notions; when they forsake the calm dictates of reason, the sober maxims of religion, and the infallible oracles of Divine Truth.

The false doctrines, the absurd ceremonies and superstitions, and the intolerable tyranny of Popery, made many to see it proper to separate from the Church of Rome, and to strike out into some new path in Religion, whilst every one was not sufficiently instructed either to conduct himself or direct others aright. Ignorance was the infelicity

of those times, the minds of the multitude were poisoned with enthusiastical or superstitious notions, they had not free access to the written Word, and Monks and Priests were too ready to inveigle and bewilder any who did not yield them implicit submission, to invent calumnies against them, or to exaggerate their faults and failings *.

The bloody inquisitors availed themselves of all this, and, like so many cruel executioners, stood always ready to strike the blow. They knew no distinction of sects, but all who opposed the Church of Rome or any of her tenets, were by them branded with the odious name of Heretics, and treated accordingly. They, with great assiduity, hunted for the remains of the Waldenses, Catharists and Apostolists, wherever they could be found. They kept up a perpetual fire of persecution against the brethren and sisters of the free spirit, who went under the common appellation of Beghards and Beguines. These affected very high strains of devotion, in contempt of external means and ordinances, and delighted to exhibit a mysterious and chimerical system of religion. Margaret Poretta, who made a conspicuous figure amongst them, endeavoured to prove in an elaborate performance, that the soul when absorbed in the love of God, was entirely secure from all sin, was freed from the restraint of every law, and might safely gratify all its passions, without incurring guilt. She shared a melancholy fate, and was burnt at Paris along with one of the brethren. Some of these people were more easy and moderate in their sentiments of religion, and were distinguished as belonging to what was called, —the right and approved class, —whilst

* Roman Catholic writers are often guilty in this respect; even Dupin appears to me frequently to mistake, or misrepresent in his History, those whom he styles Heretics.

—whilst others ran into all the wildness of mysticism.

Their numbers increased in many places, notwithstanding the severity used for their extirpation, so that many of them were consigned to the flames during the course of this century, in Italy, France, and Germany.

The Knights Templars, who had been so long established in Palestine, deserve to be ranked amongst the number of heretics, if wickedness is accounted, as it ought to be, the worst heresy in the world. These were accused, particularly by Philip the Fair, as guilty of the most atrocious crimes, and enemies to all religion. Clement V. was averse for some time to listen to any charge brought against them. At last, moved by the importunity of the French Monarch, and other considerations, he resolved to proceed against them. Accordingly, by orders of the Pope, all the Templars, dispersed through the different countries in Europe, were seized and imprisoned upon a fixed day, when totally inapprehensive of the impending blow. Their rich revenues were distributed among other orders, particularly the Knights of Malta, or confiscated to the Princes within whose kingdoms their possessions lay, and the whole order was solemnly suppressed by the council of Vienna, *A. D.* 1311. Some are of opinion that these unfortunate Knights met with a hard and unjust fate, considering, that other religious societies in the Church of Rome had degenerated as well as them from their original institution, and were chargeable with great enormities. Many of the Templars were tortured and put to death, who insisted on their innocence to the very last. But large allowances ought perhaps to be made for the violent

lent resentment which the French King had conceived against them *.

Ecclesiastical History informs us, that in this century fresh attempts were made to bring about a reconciliation between the Greek and Latin Churches. The Turks were daily enlarging their dominion, of which the Greeks grew extremely jealous, and these intimated some inclinations to submit to the Church of Rome, that from thence they might more readily draw succours against the common foe of Christianity. With this view, *Andronicus* junior, sent an ambassador into the West in the year 1339. Another Grecian deputation waited upon Clement VI. *A. D.* 1349. A third embassy was sent to Innocent VI. for the same pacific purpose, in the year 1356. At last the Greek Patriarch went to Rome in the year 1367, in order to negotiate in person so important an affair, and was followed by the Emperor himself, *A. D.* 1369. He condescended to publish a confession of his faith, to shew its conformity with that of the Latins, and used every prudent method to re-establish a good understanding between the parties. But the major part of the Greeks still retained an unconquerable aversion to the Latin Church, and could not be prevailed on to come into the requisite terms of accommodation, so that the project of a compromise and union proved abortive.

In the *fifteenth* century an important revolution took place, which ended in the ruin of the Grecian empire, and proved extremely prejudicial to the Christian cause. The Turks, a fierce and warlike people, made themselves masters of Constantinople in the year 1453, under the command of *Mahomet II.* a Prince of accomplished parts, and of an enterprising spirit. One part of that great city was

* Vid. Putean's *Histoire de la condamnation des Templiers.*

was taken by storm, the other capitulated upon terms. Hence it was, that both the Christian and Mahometan religions were there professed even in a public manner. The former was maintained in that quarter which had surrendered on articles, at least during the course of this century, whilst the other was obliged to submit to the religious impositions of the victor. Too soon however was the privilege reserved for the Christians invaded, and in process of time it was almost reduced to a shadow, and loaded with severe restrictions, under the superstitious sway of Mahometan Princes.

Along with their victorious arms, ignorance and barbarism rushed in with a mighty torrent, overspread Greece with surprizing rapidity, and made the oriental muses languish and decay. The republic of letters wore however a more placid and promising aspect in the Latin world. There the liberal arts and sciences were cultivated with care, and were tenderly cherished under the patronage and munificence of several Princes and Popes who were distinguished for taste and refinement, particularly Alphonfus VI. King of Naples, the illustrious family of the *Medicis* in Italy, and Nicholas V.

The West received a vast accession of literature upon the reduction of Constantinople, which was in this respect, of unspeakable advantage. From that period many of the most eminent Greek *Literati* removed into Italy, and other countries of Europe, instructed the youth in all the various branches of erudition, published useful compositions of their own, and many accurate editions of Greek and Latin authors, and diffused every where, a love of learning and science. In consequence of this, many academies were founded in Italy, France and Germany, libraries were multiplied at a great expence, and generous provision was made for the encouragement

encouragement of learned men, and of studious youth ambitious of literary glory.

About this time a most fortunate event occurred, highly auspicious to the interests of knowledge, and to every valuable improvement. The noble art of Printing was discovered in the year 1440, by *Lawrent Coster* of Harlem. He first invented the wooden moveable types; *John Guttenburg* of Mentz, contrived metallic types which were carved; *Scheffer* of Strasburg, perfected the art, by casting the types in an iron mould, and by giving them a more equal frame and better polish*. This admirable invention served to propagate knowledge at an easy rate, with an accuracy and facility unknown to former times, brought to light many valuable volumes of antiquity which lurked in obscurity among the Monks, circulated to a greater extent the compositions of the moderns, and excited a general curiosity and thirst for science and improvement.

Before the Greeks arrived in Italy, Aristotle reigned without a rival, and all who were led into philosophical researches viewed him with veneration, and followed him with implicit servility. But now an unexpected revolution took place in the empire of learning, and the Grecian sages, captivated with the charms of Platonic philosophy, endeavoured to supplant the Stagyrice, persuaded the most ingenious among the Latins to abandon the dry logic and metaphysical subtilty of the Peripatetics, and to adopt the serene and sublime wisdom of the immortal Plato. *Cosmo de Medicis*, enchanted with the system of this eloquent philosopher, formed a scheme of founding a Platonic academy at *Florence*. He ordered the works of the Athenian sage, and of his most renowned disciples

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* Gerard Meerman's *Origines Typographicæ*.

to be translated into Latin, and gave great encouragement to a general study and imitation of them. In consequence of this, two philosophical sects arose, who long disputed with mutual vehemence, whether Aristotle or Plato was the greatest philosopher; whilst a third party steered a middle course between the two, and aimed at a coalition of their different opinions. Scholastic theology, which dealt in intricate questions and in a jargon of abstract terms, and which was supported by the Dialecticians, lost ground, and began to be disrelished. On the other hand, the Mystics gradually gained an ascendant, who were defended by the Platonics, to whose refined notions they partly approached, and who daily rose in the esteem of the public.

The western schism was still continued and fomented by the obstinacy of the contending Pontiffs. Boniface IX. resided at Rome, and Benedict XIII. fixed his abode in Avignon. Upon the death of the former, Innocent VII. was raised to the Pontificate by the partizans of his predecessor. He soon dying, they elected in his place Angeli Corrario, a Venetian Cardinal, who assumed the name of Gregory XII. A project of accommodation was planned by some who wished well to the peace and tranquility of the Church, and both Pontiffs bound themselves by an oath to abdicate the Papal-chair, if that was needful, which sacred obligation they, however, violated in a most shameful manner. In order to heal this Papal division, a Council was assembled at Pisa, *A. D.* 1409, who acted with singular spirit and vigour. It consisted of 22 Cardinals, 4 Patriarchs, 12 Archbishops, 67 Bishops in person, 85 deputies, a considerable number of Abbots, Generals and Procurators of Orders, Deputies of Chapters, and 67 Ambassadors from Kings and Sovereign Princes.

They

They passed sentence of condemnation against the two contending parties, deposed them from the Pontificate, and declared them guilty of perjury and contumacy. They afterwards proceeded to elect Peter of Candia, who took the title of Alexander V. Notwithstanding this, Benedict and Gregory convened councils of their own, and continued to exercise the functions of the Papacy, so that the Christian Church was rent into three great factions, each owning a supreme leader, which proved a fruitful source of contention and calamity.

Alexander died at Bologna, in the year 1410, when his Cardinals promoted a Neapolitan, who assumed the name of John XXIII. a man devoid of religion and integrity.

The Emperor Sigismund, and several other European Princes, were extremely desirous of restoring peace to the Church, and of uniting it under one spiritual head. To accomplish this important end, it was judged necessary to assemble a general Council, which at last was agreed to, and which was summoned to meet at Constance in the year 1414. This celebrated Council was graced with the presence of the Emperor himself, a great number of German Princes attended in person, many Ambassadors from different States in Europe made their appearance, as did also the Pontif John, with a multitude of Cardinals, Bishops, and Abbots. This grand Assembly asserted, in the strongest manner, the absolute supremacy of a general Council, its undoubted authority to determine every thing that regards faith or manners, and declared that all persons of whatever rank or denomination, even the Roman Pontifs themselves, were subject to their jurisdiction and bound by their decrees, as representing the Universal Church, which derives its power directly from Christ himself.

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It afterwards proceeded to depose John XXIII. on account of many crimes of which he was convicted. The Council continuing to sit upon the affairs of the Church, Gregory XII. did, by proxy, voluntarily resign the Pontificate into their hands in the year 1415. About two years thereafter, the same Council degraded Benedict XIII. and with an unanimous voice placed in the Papal-chair Otto de Collonna, who assumed the name of Martin V. by which peace and union were happily restored.

The decisions and proceedings of the council of Constance gave a fatal blow to Pontifical pride. The world beheld with indignation the lordly ambition of the See of Rome, and of those who pretended to be the ghostly rulers of the Church, whose arrogance, contention, and obstinacy, so frequently produced the most deplorable evils.

The mouths of men were opened to inveigh with vehemence against the vices of the Clergy, the enormities of the Monastic Orders, and the general corruption and degeneracy of the Church, both in its head and members.

The eyes of Europe were fixed on this famous council, and conceived sanguine hopes of a thorough reformation, such as should set bounds to the despotism of the Roman Pontiffs, give a check to the growing licentiousness of the Ecclesiastical Order, revive the rules of Primitive discipline, and replace religion on a better footing. The assembled Fathers acknowledged the necessity of this salutary work, and did not seem displeased with those who urged the execution of it. Yet all this was policy and pretext, whilst many difficulties were artfully started, many evasions ingeniously devised, with a view to prevent or postpone so beneficial a project. Powerful passions and prejudices prevailed, mutual jealousies and jarring interests interfered, and the

dignitaries of the Church were inwardly averse to a reformation which might strike upon themselves, or obstruct their darling designs. The very Pontif who was newly created Martin V. in whom many reposed great confidence, was no sooner invested with the Papal dignity, than he gave unexpected evidence of a fixed intention, to quash all measures that might tend to restore the purity of religion, or to strengthen the reins of discipline. Thus it came to pass, that this illustrious Council was dissolved upon the 22d of April *A. D.* 1418, after it had sat three years and six months, without effecting what was one principal end of their meeting, and what all good men ardently wished.

About five years after this, Martin was prevailed on to summon a new Council. This was countenanced by his successor Eugenius IV. and was held at Basil in the year 1431. The two capital points on which they were to deliberate were, the union of the Greek and Latin Churches, and a general reformation of the whole. The members of this grand convocation appear to have formed a sincere design of effectuating both these ends. But the scheme of a reformation alarmed the Roman Pontif, nothing was more remote than this from his thoughts: He employed every stratagem to obstruct it, and twice attempted to dissolve the Council which counteracted his most settled purposes.

They, however, continued to sit, asserted their privileges, insisted on the superiority of general Councils to the Popes themselves, and enacted several laws, by which *Annats*, *Expectatives*, *Reserves*, *Provisions*, and other Papal impositions were abolished. The haughty Pontif, exasperated at these proceedings, pretended, by an edict which he issued, to dissolve the council at *Basil*, and convened another in opposition to it, which accordingly met at
Ferrara,

Ferrara, and which he opened in person in the year 1438.

The plague breaking out there the following year, it was removed to Florence, where the members, under Papal direction, excommunicated the Council of *Basil*, and declared all their acts and proceedings null and void. These on the other hand, supported by the Emperor, the King of France, and several other Princes, first pronounced a sentence of contumacy against Eugenius for refusing to obey their summons, and afterwards they deposed him from the Pontificate on the 25th of June *A. D.* 1439.

They persisting with firmness in vigorous measures, and deriding the Papal bulls thundered against them, thought proper to elect to the See of Rome, Amadeus Duke of Savoy, who assumed the title of Felix V.

Hereupon a fresh schism ensued to the great scandal of religion, two Popes and two Councils contending together, each of whom had numerous and powerful partizans.

The Council of Basil continued to sit till the year 1443, enacting laws and passing decrees, notwithstanding all the efforts used by Eugenius to put a stop to their proceedings. The Council of Florence was chiefly employed in negotiations with the Greek Church, in order to unite it to the Latin, which, by promises and threatnings, and a variety of intrigue, was at last effected, though it proved of short duration. The Grecian Emperor and Patriarch, with a train of Bishops and Doctors, appeared in person, in order to give greater weight to such a solemn transaction, and as they were at that juncture reduced to great extremity by the Turks, who in fact soon thereafter proved victorious, as was already noticed.

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✓ The conditions of concord and peace which Eugenius prescribed to the Greeks were these, That they should acknowledge that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Son as well as from the Father ; that departed souls were purified by fire in an intermediate state, before they were admitted into heaven, and to the presence of God ; that unleavened bread might be used in the Sacrament of the Supper ; and that the Roman Pontif was the supreme Judge and Head of the whole Catholic Church.

These articles, and the agreement made, gave great umbrage at Constantinople. Every thing, it was said, had been conducted in the council at Florence by chicane and stratagem, by bribes, promises, or menaces, so that the former schism was renewed, and fresh animosity kindled.

Eugenius died in February 1447, and was succeeded by Thomas Sarzano, Bishop of Bologna, who is known by the name of Nicholas V.

He was a person of profound erudition, of distinguished talents, a zealous promoter of the liberal arts and sciences, and a generous patron of learned men. He was also remarkable for a spirit of moderation, and discovered a love of peace and a mildness of manners, which charmed all, and prefigured the return of union and tranquillity. This event happily took place under his Pontificate ; the European Princes were solicitous to accomplish it ; Felix V. was prevailed on to resign the Papal-chair, the Council of Basil re-assembled at Laufenne, and confirmed the deed ; at same time they passed a solemn decree, ordaining the Church universal, to acknowledge Nicholas as sole Pontif, and to submit to his authority, whilst he on the other hand ratified their laws and decisions.

The corrupt state of Religion was so apparent, and the irregularities of the ecclesiastical Order
were

were so flagrant and offensive, that Councils saw it necessary to interpose their authority ; and in these illustrious assemblies, there were some, who, with great boldness and severity, censured the tyranny of the court of Rome, and the degeneracy of Bishops, Priests, and Monks. Declamations of this nature came to be the general topics of the times. Various commotions concerning the affairs of religion were raised in several parts of Europe. The doctrines of Wickliff had overspread England and Scotland, and greatly alarmed the Pope. They likewise made their way into foreign kingdoms, particularly into Bohemia, found a kind reception amongst considerable numbers there, and were embraced by some members in the university of Prague, about the year 1408. Of these John Hufs, Professor of Divinity, was the most famous, a Doctor in high esteem for purity of doctrine and sanctity of manners, and of distinguished learning and eloquence. He inveighed with vehemence against the Pope, Cardinals and Bishops, the vices of the sacerdotal Order, and many practices in the Church of Rome, whilst he endeavoured to withdraw the university of Prague from the jurisdiction of Gregory XII.

He was a man of such influence, as to obtain from King Wencislaus a revocation of the privileges of other nations in the University, in behalf of Bohemia, which was restored to three suffrages that had been usurped by the German nation, distinguished into *Poles*, *Bavarians*, and *Saxons*, though originally thrown into one division.

The consequence of this was, that a great many of the latter class retired from Prague to Leipfick, where Frederic, Elector of Saxony, founded a University which subsists to this day. From hence likewise arose many enemies who persecuted John Hufs

Hufs by word and writing, and who were active to inflame accusations against him. Accordingly he was summoned to the tribunal of John XXIII. This he disregarded and made no compearance, upon which he was declared contumacious, and excommunicated. Afterwards, the Council of Constance ordered him to appear before them, and to answer to the charge of heresy brought against him. In order to secure him from all kind of violence, he obtained the grant of a Safe-conduct from the Emperor Sigismund. Depending entirely upon this, he readily repaired to Constance, and pled his cause before the Council with a masculine and flowing eloquence. But many there, were resolved upon his destruction; they condemned him, his writings and doctrines; and, contrary to all good faith, and to the imperial Pass-port, he was in a scandalous manner divested of his sacerdotal habit, thrown into prison, declared an Herefiarch, delivered over to the secular arm, and put into the hands of the Duke of *Bavaria*. Thereupon his books were publicly burnt at the church-door, and he himself was committed to the flames upon the 6th of July, *A. D.* 1415.

This eminent person passed through the tragical scene, with heroic resolution and Christian fortitude, expressed the warmest sentiments and feelings of Religion, a confident expectation of a blessed immortality, and a high hope that Heaven would not desert but prosper the cause for which he suffered.

Jerome of Prague who attended and supported John Hufs, his beloved friend and companion, was likewise arraigned before the Council, and threatened with the same miserable fate, if he did not instantly abjure his opinions. Thrown into a panic at the prospect of such a cruel death, he signified his

his willingness to retract and yield submission to the Romish Church. Notwithstanding this, he was remanded to prison upon a pretext of insincerity. There he collected his native strength, resumed courage, and being re-examined by the members of Council, he declared his sorrow for having done any thing that could even be construed into a recantation, and publicly professed the same principles which his martyred friend had done.

Hereupon he was sentenced to death, led out to execution, tied to a stake, and burnt alive, on the 30th of May, *A. D.* 1416; to all which he submitted with patience and magnanimity.

Thus did these early Reformers fall victims to the rage of superstition, the violence of faction, and the revenge of personal animosity; all which contributed to the ruin of those eminent men, who deserved a better fate, nay, who were well entitled to universal esteem.

Their numerous disciples were not discouraged but rather animated by their death. No sooner were the news of this heard at Prague, than they flew to their arms, destroyed the Archbishop's palace, and massacred several persons who appeared most obnoxious. The Nobility of Bohemia and Moravia were exasperated at the violation of the Public Faith, entered into a league not to receive the canons of that Council which had unjustly condemned Hufs and Jerome, and resolved to defend their memories and doctrines to the utmost of their power. A large body of the Hussites, amounting to 30,000, retreated to a high mountain which they called Tabor, where they built a large and regular city, which they fortified in the strongest manner. They chose for their leader the famous *Ziska*, a Bohemian Knight, a man of intrepid bravery,

very, under whose standard a numerous army was soon mustered.

Upon the death of Wencislaus, King of Bohemia, the Emperor Sigismund succeeded to the throne, who enacted severe laws against the Hussites, and employed the force of arms to reduce them, by which many of them suffered in a most cruel manner. The Bohemians exasperated at such barbarous proceedings, withdrew their subjection in the year 1420, and declared open war against their Sovereign. Ziska their illustrious Chief, expert in war, and leading on a zealous and intrepid band, met with signal success, gained several victories over the Emperor, made himself master of Prague, and afterwards of all Bohemia. Upon his death, *Procopius Raza* succeeded as General, a man little inferior for spirit and valour, and who carried on the war to great advantage. In the course of it, the most inhuman barbarities were committed on both sides; depredation, carnage and blood marked the progress of the contending armies. They were mutually inflamed against one another to a savage degree; both held it as a maxim, that it was lawful to expirate Heretics by fire and sword, and each appeared to the other in this unfortunate point of light. It is not difficult to descry the ravage and calamity which such a pernicious principle would spread, heightened by all the motives of revenge, superstition or conscience.

As the Hussites greatly increased in numbers, so their union diminished. Misunderstanding sprang up amongst themselves which divided them into two factions, known by the distinction of Calixtines and Taborites. The first were more moderate in their demands, strenuously insisted on the use of the cup or chalice in the Lord's Supper, which
they

they said ought to be administred in both kinds; required that the Word of God should be preached in a plain, intelligible manner; that the Ecclesiastical Orders should be brought to greater regularity, and restrained in their worldly pursuits and possessions; and that the punishment of crimes should be left to the Civil Magistrate.

The Taborites aimed at higher things, and wanted to reduce every thing in Religion to the standard of primitive simplicity. They demanded an abolition of Papal power and authority, that the form of Divine worship, and of ecclesiastical government should be changed, that superstitious rites and ceremonies should be condemned, that an universal Reformation should take place, and a new Church and Hierarchy erected on the ruins of the present.

Some ran into the wildness of fanaticism and religious cruelty *, spoke of the suggestion and impulse of the Spirit as the grand directory, and of the personal appearance and presidence of Christ upon earth, for the government of his Church.

The unjustifiable errors and actions of these last mentioned, are imputed by some to the whole class of Hussites at large, without making that distinction which truth and impartiality require.

The Council of Basil earnestly wished and laboured to put an end to a war which had occasioned so much confusion and bloodshed. With this view the Bohemians were invited to come
H h there,

* This may be learned from the—*Diarium Hussiticum*—of Byzinius, and of which the following passage is a specimen.—*In hoc tempore ultionis, quilibet fidelis, etiam Presbyter, quantumcunque spiritualis, est maledictus, qui gladium suum corporalem prohibet a sanguine adversariorum legis Christi, sed debet manus suas lavare in eorum sanguine et sanctificare.*

there, that some method of accommodation might, if possible, be devised. Many of them were averse to this proposal, but the Nobles and leading men obtained a solemn deputation of three hundred persons, to whom the Council gave an ample Passport. After many conferences and warm debates, these returned home without effecting any thing. The Council afterwards sent ambassadors into Bohemia, who entered into separate negotiations with the Nobility, who thereupon were suspected by the people. Matters at last came to an open rupture. A decisive battle was fought between these parties, the Calixtines and Taborites were defeated, Procopius was killed, and Sigismund was acknowledged King of Bohemia.

After this, a treaty of peace was concluded with the Bohemians and Moravians, to which the Calixtines acceded, on obtaining the privilege of the cup in the Eucharist. The Emperor made a triumphant entry into Prague in September 1436, and the Romish service and ceremonies were re-established in all the Churches.

The Taborites were inflexible; and neither artifice, persuasion, nor persecution could vanquish their resolution, or prevail on them to abandon their principles. These, however, they reviewed with care, and improved to advantage. Lopping off what was wrong, retrenching what appeared redundant or unnecessary, and weighing every article with leisure and candour, they new-modelled their religious system, and gave it a more consistent and scriptural aspect. They discarded from their communion such whose tenets or manners were any way licentious or disgraceful, adhered stedfastly to the Faith in opposition to Popery, being now known by the name of the Bohemian Brethren, but whom their enemies sometimes stiled Picards, or Beghards,

hards, and as a great auxiliary body they afterwards joined Luther and Calvin in the glorious work of the Reformation.

We have already had occasion to remark, that the excellent art of Printing, so conducive to the propagation of knowledge, was found out in this century, and now we would observe, that toward the conclusion of it, the new world of America was discovered, which opened up an immense field for the extension of trade and commerce. The useful invention of the mariner's needle and compass, had been discovered in the kingdom of Naples about the year 1330. From that time gradual improvements were made in the art of navigation, sailing was rendered a great deal safer, and more frequent; and distant voyages were undertaken. The *Portuguese*, in particular, had penetrated as far as Ethiopia and the *Indies*, and other nations were advancing in imitation of them. But none proved so bold and successful an adventurer at sea as Christopher Columbus, a native of *Genoa*, in the service of Spain. He observing, and weighing with attention, what a vast disproportion there must be between the land and water which were supposed to divide the terraqueous globe, concluded with a kind of confidence, that there must be another continent beyond the *Atlantic* ocean. The probability of this he represented to different courts in Europe, for several years, who treated it as a romantic project. At last he received a commission from the court of Spain, who enabled him to equip three ships, and furnished him with men, money, and provisions. He accordingly set sail on the 3d of August 1492, and arrived safe at the Canaries. From thence he proceeded to the westward in quest of this unknown region. Nothing appearing for a long while, his men began to mutiny, and entered
into

into a conspiracy against his life. At this crisis of time, he fortunately discovered a light from shore, and, upon the 17th of October, made the land, which produced reconciliation and joy. He first made himself master of different islands, particularly Cuba, Hispaniola and Jamaica, and from thence opened an easy passage into the vast continent of America.

How this immense region was at first peopled, has been the subject of much dispute, and of many curious conjectures. Some have thought it highly probable, that this was done by the antient Carthaginians, who were famous navigators. They themselves were situated on the north-west coast of Africa, and possessed the Canary and Cape-Verd islands in the Atlantic ocean. From time to time they sent large colonies to these places, their ships were of large construction, and sometimes carried 1000 men. Some of these might miss their passage and be driven westward, or voluntarily proceed in quest of new habitations. From these, however, they would find it impossible to return, on account of the trade-winds, which would always blow contrary to them, and which their infant skill could not surmount. Thus the Americans would remain unknown. For it is by the aid of the compass and other improvements, that a way is found out of sailing into higher latitudes, out of the course of the trade-winds, by which ships can now return to the eastern continent.

But others think it much more probable, that the natives of America originally came from China, Japan, or some part of Tartary. It is asserted with great confidence by some, that the Chinese knew the arts of navigation, printing, and the use of guns a long time before the Europeans*. Nor is it incredible

* *Hornius de Origine Gentium Americanarum.* Harris's *Travels*, in folio, p. 8, 9, 17, 18.

credible that such an ingenious and prolific people should send out colonies to replenish other parts of the world. At the time of the Spanish conquest, the *Incas* of *Peru* did not boast of any original beyond 400 years, nor the Mexicans above 300 years.

In *Peru*, particularly, the same taste in architecture prevails as among the Chinese, and the inhabitants resemble them in respect of the vast extent of their cities, and the magnitude and manner of their towers and fortified places. It is likewise related, that about the year 1268, great multitudes of the Chinese, were, by an invasion of the Tartars, obliged to leave their country, and that they fled into certain remote islands, which, in all probability, lay on the American shore.

With regard to Tartary, the most skilful navigators have not been able to sail from the north, round the eastern coasts of that country. Nay, some have conjectured that a certain neck of land may have stretched from thence to America; or that this cannot, at any rate, be very far distant from some parts of Tartary. And many of the Americans resemble the Scythians or Tartars in their forms of idolatry, in their manner of living, and of pasturing their cattle.

However, we would now observe, that Americus Vesputius, a Florentine, was likewise employed by Emanuel King of Portugal, to proceed for America, to make discoveries and obtain possessions, which he accordingly did, and called that extensive region by his own name. Alexander VI. fond of aggrandizing the Roman See, and imitating the lordly example of his assuming predecessors, who disposed of crowns and kingdoms in Europe, gave a fresh instance of Pontifical presumption, with a shew of generosity, bestowed what was not his own,
and

and divided all America between the Spaniards and the Portuguese. He exhorted these two nations to propagate the gospel among the Americans, and appointed a great number of Franciscans and Dominicans to settle amongst them, and to promote their conversion. But they carried the spirit, not of Christianity but of Popery with them, were more intent to subject the natives to the See of Rome, than to Jesus Christ, and to acquire grandeur and opulence for themselves, than to forward the salvation of souls. And what else could be expected in America, considering the conduct of the Roman Clergy in Europe, and the characters of that superstition which they taught, in the room of real religion? Besides, the Dominicans and Franciscans were, in a particular manner, chargeable with great irregularities, both in doctrine and practice; and indeed the whole ecclesiastical Order were at this time sunk into deep and mournful degeneracy, utterly inconsistent with their sacred profession.



P A R T

P A R T IV.

WE now arrive at that grand period of the Christian Church, which I fixed at the glorious æra of the Reformation, about the beginning of the sixteenth century.

This opens to our view a spacious and fertile field stored with rich materials, where the greatest difficulty will be, to select with judgment, and to abridge with propriety.

Notwithstanding the power and prevalence of Popery during many preceeding ages of the Church, notwithstanding the ignorance and superstition which had hitherto generally reigned, yet there were, even amidst the darkest times, some men of brighter parts and of more eminent piety, who often appeared, if not to stem the torrent of delusion, yet to diffuse some glimmerings of light, who groaned under the oppressions, and lamented the errors of the Church of Rome, and who entertained juster notions of religion.

Besides many who may not have come to our knowledge, besides the long list of faithful witnesses who bore testimony to the truth, particularly recorded by some authors †, we may recollect those
whom

† Flaccius Illyricus, Usher, Spanheim, and others.

whom we have transiently mentioned, the Waldenses and Albigenes, the Wickliffites, the Hussites and Bohemian brethren, who lifted up a standard against Antichrist. Nay, even in the bosom of the Church there were not a few private persons who loudly complained; and many powerful Princes and States remonstrated against the arrogance, the lordly dominion and tyranny of the Pontiffs, the wealth, indolence, and wickedness of the Clergy, who regretted the corruption of religion, and wished earnestly for some reformation. Pope Adrian himself acknowledged the necessity of this, and several councils were convened under some specious but elusory pretexs of this nature, whilst nothing essential was effected.

This glorious work was reserved for Martin Luther, whom Providence raised up in a remarkable manner, in the year 1517, as an eminent instrument, in conjunction with other cotemporary reformers, to bring about one of the most signal and interesting revolutions in human history. The noble and pious enterprize was prospered by Heaven, notwithstanding very formidable opposition. The great champions who led the way, were inspired with a most ardent zeal for religion, and an invincible force and intrepidity of mind, equal to the arduous undertaking. The seeds of reformation had been formerly sown, which now sprang up to advantage and maturity. The revival of learning, a taste for the liberal arts and sciences after a long and dismal night of darkness, and a spirit of investigation opened the eyes of mankind, and enabled them to discern more clearly, and to judge with greater accuracy. The sacred books were now happily spread through most of the states and countries in Europe, translated into the vernacular language of each nation, particularly in Italy, Germany,

ny, France and Britain. The Roman Pontifs had risen to a dangerous summit of power and dominion, and the Romish religion to an enormous height of superstition. The ecclesiastical Orders wallowed in wealth, luxury, idleness and vice. Their share of property and over-grown opulence are almost incredible, and without some effectual check, they bade fair to have engrossed in process of time all the power and riches of the world. Universal monarchy is a formidable monster. But an universal empire of Popery, uniting both spirituals and temporals into one supreme head, would have been a general calamity, a tremendous evil, pregnant with every mischief, and fatal to the civil and religious interests of mankind. Some ideas of the balance of power may have struck States and Princes at that time, which now poises and regulates all the kingdoms of Europe, and is so grand an object of political attention. Money and property constitute the strength and sinews of a nation. Rank, precedence, dominion and authority follow in a natural train. All these were in a manner monopolized by the Church of Rome. Her Pontifs, Cardinals, Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops, and Abbots, were like so many sovereign princes. Many Ecclesiastics were employed in the highest offices and negotiations of State. Inferior Orders possessed proportionable wealth, and innumerable stratagems or arguments were devised to increase it, fetched from this world or from another. Convents, monastries and nunneries drained the riches of many countries, and what was thus swallowed up, reverted not again to circulate in trade and commerce, but only served to pamper and aggrandize a separate body of men, disjoined from the rest of the world, by an unnatural subjection to celibacy. Even in Scotland, the riches and privileges of the

Clergy were exorbitant. David I. from his excessive superstition and liberality, transferred into their hands most of the crown-lands, which were of vast extent. * They were in use to pay no less than the one half of the land-tax, from which it may be reasonably inferred, that the half of national territory appertained to them. From the earliest times of the Scottish monarchy to the death of Cardinal Beaton in the year 1546, 54 persons had held the high office of Lord Chancellor, of which number 43 had been Ecclesiastics. The Lords of Session in Scotland constitute the supreme Court in civil causes, of which the one half, besides the President, were made up of church-men; and their seat and influence in Parliament are well known.

In England, the wealth of the Roman Catholic Clergy appears to have been little inferior. When a survey was made by William the Conqueror, of all the land in England, the whole amounted to 60,215 Knight's fees; of which the Church then possessed 28,015. To this, large additions were afterwards made, till the time of Edward I. who enacted the statute of Mortmain, by which it is declared illegal to give any estate to the Church without the King's express leave.

When Henry VIII. dissolved about 1000 convents, monastries, and abbeys, the annual revenue of these alone was found to amount to L. 2,653,000, a great part of which went to Rome, as the Governors and Governesses of many of these religious houses were foreigners and resided in Italy.

Among so many nations and such multitudes of people who embraced the Reformation, some secular considerations might, no doubt, operate in part, and they were justly intitled to a certain degree of attention, in subordination to religion. But if either

* Dr Robertson's Hist. of Scotland, vol. I. p. 121. and 123.

ther too great regard was paid to them, or if in any instance the Reformation was promoted by wrong methods, or from sinister views,—be this to the parties or persons alone; nor can this serve to invalidate or condemn the Reformation itself, no more than ought the corruptions of Popery to be imputed to Christianity. The cause which the reformers espoused was evidently good, noble, and glorious, which asserted the rights of conscience, and the genuine truth of gospel-revelation, in opposition to the most violent encroachments, and to the grossest adulteration. Its grand design was to abandon a Church that would not be reformed, which was deeply depraved in doctrine and discipline, worship and government, which was overrun with superstition, and converted into a system of civil and religious tyranny, which had spread its delusions far and wide through the world, and triumphed for ages together over mankind in the most lawless manner. It was to stand up in behalf of God and Christianity, of interests the most sacred and essential to men, to shake off the shackles of human authority in the important matters of religion, and to reduce every thing relative to it, to the infallible standard of Holy Scripture. These were the worthy principles and views which animated the illustrious band of reformers, which made many of them undergo poverty, disgrace, banishment, long and severe trials, and even resist unto blood. In many various lights the blessed Reformation from Popery must appear to be well warranted, and may be fully defended upon principles of reason and religion, of liberty and policy.

Luther, in particular, was actuated by great and religious considerations, to stand forth as a brazen bulwark against Papal impositions. It was the force of truth which made him raise his voice and draw
his

his pen, that inspired him with ardour and intrepidity, and not any ignoble motives of avarice or resentment*. And a man of his distinguished abilities bid fair to have risen high in the Church of Rome, had his conscience permitted him to continue in it.

Martin Luther was born at *Aisleben*, a town in Saxony, on the 10th of November 1483. He spent some time in the study of law, but afterwards became a Monk of the Augustine Order. He was ordained Priest in the year 1507, and was sent to Rome the following year by the convents, that had fallen into some contest with their General, which difference was accommodated under his direction. Upon his return, he was made Professor of Divinity in the academy at Wittemberg, where he taught both theology and philosophy with the highest reputation. He was a man of a towering genius and extensive learning, possessing a solid understanding and a tenacious memory, singular for patience, application, and a certain magnanimity of soul, which rose superior to danger and difficulty.

These great qualities were brought forth to light and shone with uncommon advantage, by his vigorous opposition to Papal power and imposition. Leo X. the reigning Pontif, had, by his largesses and magnificence, drained his coffers; and, in order to supply them, he was advised to raise money by selling indulgences. These, which undertook to absolve both the living and the dead, and to remit

† Some Romish historians, as also Mr *Hume*, in his History of the reign of Henry VIII. throw a slur on Luther's character, by ascribing his conduct to mean motives, contrary to fact, the most authentic histories, and a variety of striking circumstances which evidently clear him. For full satisfaction, I refer the Reader to the judicious remarks made by Dr Maclain, in his Translation of Dr Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. vol. III. p. 304. the octavo Edition.

mit sins past, present and future, at certain fixed prices, were sent all over Europe in a scandalous manner. John Tetzel, a Dominican, was employed to publish and dispose of them in Germany.

This audacious agent executed his commission in the most insolent and fraudulent manner. He boasted of the efficacy of the indulgences which he granted, as sufficient to expiate for the most enormous crimes, and with gross impiety derogated from the merits of Jesus Christ. These flagrant abuses raised the indignation of our famous Reformer. Luther could not behold, in silence, such a shameful traffic carried on to the infinite disgrace of his religion, and the delusion of his fellow Christians. Under this conviction, he was led to examine not only the nature and tendency of the indulgences, but also the authority by which they were published. The discovery of one error prompted him to pursue his enquiry, and conducted him to the detection of more. At last, after mature deliberation, he published 95 Theses against the Church of Rome upon the 30th of September 1517.

John Tetzel was appointed to answer them, and others joined him in the controversy, in which they displayed more vehemence than argument. Luther replied with great superiority of reason and learning, and, in the course of this debate, brought to light many monstrous errors and abuses; exposed the frauds and licentious lives of the Monks and Priests, and attacked the authority, the superstition and tyranny of the Church of Rome. He publicly declared the integrity of his intentions, at same time, in order to secure the countenance and aid of temporal Princes, he took care to explain the nature and extent of civil power, so visibly encroached upon by Papal usurpation.

Many

Many Divines, some Cardinals, and George Duke of Saxony, struck with the justice of his cause, and the force of argument and eloquence with which he defended it, favoured him. It is reported, that the Emperor himself said, that Luther ought to be protected as he might be highly useful. Leo X. was not at first much moved with the matter; but being informed by Maximilian I. that it was an affair of great importance, he summoned Luther to appear at Rome, and there to give an account of his doctrine and conduct.

Frederic the Wise, Elector of Saxony, insisted that the cause of Luther came within the cognizance of a German tribunal. The Roman Pontif yielded to this representation, and ordered him to plead his cause before Cardinal Cajetan, at the diet of Augsburgh. This imperious legate was himself a Dominican, an avowed enemy to Luther, and a zealous friend of Tetzels, from whom therefore no accommodation could be expected.

The event of things confirmed this suspicion. The Saxon Reformer repaired to Augsburgh, and held several conferences with Cajetan, who behaved in the most domineering manner, adducing authority alone instead of argument. Whereupon Luther returned to Wittemberg, having first appealed to the Pope, and afterwards to a general Council. Leo X. with great indiscretion, let loose the reins to Papal despotism, and published an edict, in which, with boundless effrontery, he asserted a Pontifical power to deliver from all the punishments due to transgressions of every kind. This still further confirmed Luther in his opposition to a Church which could vent such impious doctrine. The Pope, however, employed others of a mild and moderate turn, in order to soothe a little, and to bring about some sort of reconciliation. But Luther, having chosen

chosen his ground with judgment and deliberation, remained firm and inflexible. Thereupon Leo, urged on by zealous, but imprudent counsellors, issued out a bull of excommunication against him, in the month of June 1520, condemned him as guilty of Heresy, and ordered his writings to be publicly burnt. Luther now saw that it was full time to concert effectual measures for his own defence, and for the success of his cause. In order therefore to shew the world that he was now to separate from the communion of the Romish Church, which was become deeply degenerate, and to convince them of that spirit of intrepidity with which he was resolved to act, he erected a large pile of wood without the walls of the city of Wittemberg, on the 10th of December 1520, and in presence of a vast concourse of people, committed to the flames the bull that had been published against him, as also the decretals and edicts which asserted the Papal supremacy. Hereupon a second anathema was thundered out against our Reformer, at which, however, he was no wise dismayed. Instead of this, he prosecuted his plan of Reformation with greater fervour, applied himself to the most assiduous search after truth, and, with a bold hand, laid open the errors of the Romish Church, and the tyranny of her Pontifs. In this important work, he was joined by Philip Melancton, Professor at Wittemberg, Andrew Caroldstad Arch-deacon of that city, *Bucer* of Strasburgh, and by many other pious and learned men in various parts of Europe. Among these, Erasmus Roterodamus holds a principal place, who warmly espoused the cause of religion and liberty, and by his writings endeavoured to clear away the rust and rubbish of former ages, and to substitute solid learning and more accurate reasoning. Vast numbers of people of every rank, forsook the tenets

nets and usages of Popery, in which they had been long detained, and welcomed with ardour the dawning of that light which now began to break in upon them.

Rome was not a little alarmed at the prospect, and used various methods to obstruct the progress of the Reformers. Upon the death of Maximilian I. his grandson, Charles V. King of Spain, succeeded to the Empire *A. D.* 1519. Leo X. applied with great earnestness to the new Emperor, to engage him to act with vigour against Luther and all his adherents. But he was sensible of his great obligations to Frederick the Wise, in raising him to the imperial throne, in opposition to his competitor Francis I. King of France. By the persuasion therefore of the Elector of Saxony, he refused to inflict any punishment on Luther, but agreed to have his cause fairly tried before a diet to be assembled at Worms. These diets were like so many provincial councils, which judged not only in political but ecclesiastical causes, and in which Prelates and Abbots sat and voted, along with the Princes of the Empire. Luther was furnished with a safe-conduct from the Emperor; in consequence of which he appeared * at the diet on the 17th of April 1521, and in that grand assembly pleaded his cause with a firmness of mind, a strength of argument, and splendor of eloquence, which charmed if they did not persuade. Mere authority, menaces or promises, and subtile evasions were only opposed to all that dignity of truth and candour of conduct which the Saxon Reformer that day displayed in so eminent a manner. He was nobly obstinate in a good cause, and that was sufficient Heresy. He
was

* When Luther's friends tried to dissuade him from venturing himself at Worms, he said, That if he had to encounter as many devils as there were tiles upon the houses of that city, he would go, and trust Providence.

was thereupon condemned by an unanimous voice, and declared an enemy to the holy Roman Empire. Frederick his friend, fearful of consequences, took care to conduct him, upon his return, to the castle of Wartenburg, where he lay concealed for ten months. This place he called his Patmos, and there he employed his leisure hours in composing various works, which he afterwards published to the world, and which were of signal service in promoting the Reformation, along with his German translation of the Holy Scriptures.

Adrian VI. succeeded Leo in the Pontificate, who sent a legate to the diet assembled at Nuremberg *A. D.* 1522, to demand an immediate execution of the sentence that had been passed against Luther and his followers. At same time he was authorized to declare the Pontif's readiness to rectify grievances and abuses. This encouraged the German Princes to require that a general Council should be convened, and to delay the consideration of religious matters till that was done. They also exhibited a heavy charge against the court of Rome, for many repeated injuries which had been offered to the German nation.

Upon the death of Frederick, John his brother, succeeded as Elector of Saxony. This great Prince acted with more vigour and resolution, at once shook off all subjection to the See of Rome, assumed the supreme ecclesiastical power within his own dominions, and therein founded a new independent Church upon the principles of the Reformers. In order to give form and stability to this infant establishment, he employed Luther and Melancthon to draw up a body of laws, regulating worship, government and discipline; and, in the year 1527, he appointed heralds to make publication of these throughout all his dominions. At same time he

supplied the churches with learned and pious Pastors, and watched over the doctrine and morals of the Clergy with an attentive eye. Several other States and Princes in Germany followed the noble example that was set them, and, renouncing Papal jurisdiction, resolutely introduced by their own authority, the same regulations in religion which the Elector of Saxony had done. Thus a twofold and open rupture was formed, one with the Church of Rome, another in the Germanic body itself; as one part embraced the Reformation, whilst another still adhered to Papal superstition.

In this critical situation of affairs, a diet was assembled at *Spire*, in the year 1526, whilst the Roman Catholics intimated designs of making war upon the Reformers, and they, on the other hand, were meditating plans of confederacy for their mutual defence, and for the security of their cause. When the diet was opened, in which Ferdinand, the Emperor's brother presided, proposals were made by the Imperial Ambassadors, to suppress all farther disputes about religion, and, in the mean time, to execute the sentence denounced against Luther and his adherents at Worms. This motion was warmly opposed by a great majority of the German Princes. They strenuously insisted that a general Council should be first assembled, who were invested with the proper right of judging and deciding in these matters. They therefore agreed to address the Emperor, and to request his summoning a free œcumenical Council, and determined, that, in the mean time, the different Princes and States of the empire should be at liberty, to regulate the affairs of religion within their respective provinces, as they themselves should judge expedient.

Nothing could be more humiliating to the Church of Rome, or more favourable for the cause of the Reformation.

Reformation than this determination of the diet. It encouraged vast numbers to think and act with greater freedom than ever, and to shake off the Papal yoke in which they had been formerly fettered. It afforded a noble opportunity to the Reformers, which they improved with singular industry, to propagate their opinions, and to digest their plans. It inspired them with fresh ardour and resolution, and gave a kind of sanction and consistency to the glorious cause in which they were engaged. At this time too, they were unmolested by Charles V. the troubled state of whose dominions in Italy, France, and Spain, prevented him from attending to the civil affairs of Germany, and still less to matters of religion. Besides, very fortunately for the Reformers, he was highly exasperated against the Roman Pontif, Clement VII. For he had entered into an alliance with the French and Venetians against the Emperor, from a jealousy of his power in Italy, after the victory he had obtained over Francis I. at the battle of Pavia. Nay, in the heat of resentment Charles carried matters so far, as to abolish Papal jurisdiction in his Spanish dominions, to make war upon his Holiness in Italy, to block him up in the castle of St Angelo, and to lay siege to Rome *A. D.* 1527.

At last, however, he concluded a treaty with Clement VII. and summoned a new diet at Spire in the year 1529. Then the scene was reversed. By a majority of votes now obtained, the unanimous decision of the former diet was revoked, and it was declared unlawful to make any innovation whatever in religion, until a Council was convened and gave forth its decrees. It was easy to foresee that this would be postponed or eluded by the Pontif and all his adherents, considering the critical situation of affairs. The decision of this diet appeared

appeared to many members, contrary to the good faith of the former one, and extremely iniquitous in the eyes of those who saw the necessity of an immediate Reformation. These therefore argued and remonstrated in the warmest manner against such unjust proceedings. But when they found that all their prudent and pious attempts of this nature were ineffectual, then the Princes of the empire who were well affected to the cause of true religion, particularly, John, Elector of Saxony, George, Elector of Brandenburg, Ernest and Francis, Dukes of Lunenburg, the Landgrave of Hesse, and Prince of Anhalt, entered a solemn protest against the decisions of the diet. To this, 14 imperial cities acceded; and it is from this famous Protestation that the denomination of *Protestants* is given to the Reformers.

The German Princes, who had dissented on this memorable occasion, deputed proper persons to wait on the Emperor, and to inform him of what they had done. These executed their commission with a firmness and spirit, expressive of that magnanimity which inspired the illustrious personages whom they represented. Charles V. thought himself slighted, and his designs counteracted by the steps that had been taken in his absence, and commanded the ambassadors to be put under an arrest. The news of this violent procedure alarmed the Protestant Princes; and they now perceived that their personal security, as well as the success of their cause, depended upon mutual friendship and confederacy among themselves. With this view several meetings were held, but, for some time, without effect, on account of the various views, and disagreeing opinions which prevailed. Another incident which served to postpone that union which present circumstances demanded, arose from

a controversy between the Divines of Saxony and Switzerland, concerning the manner of Christ's presence in the sacrament. Luther, yet unfettered from some prejudices in which he had been educated, taught the doctrine of Consubstantiation, as it has been termed by some; allowed that our Saviour was present in the Eucharist after an extraordinary manner, and whilst he condemned the Popish tenet of Transubstantiation, thought that communicants might be said to partake of the real body and blood of Christ.

Zuinglius, the great Swiss Reformer, maintained that the bread and wine were no more than external emblems or symbols, intended to call up to our thoughts a more lively remembrance of Christ's death.

In order to terminate this unseasonable dispute, a conference was held at Marburg in the year 1529, which continued for four days. The Doctors of each party could not, however, convince the other, but at last they all agreed upon a sort of truce, granting a mutual toleration of sentiments upon this article, that they might unite against the common enemy, and for the support of a more essential cause.

The Protestant Ministers had formed a design of sending a solemn embassy to the Emperor, when an account came that he himself was resolved to attend in person the approaching diet at Augsbourg. In his progress thither he had an interview with Clement VII. at Bologna, when, in the most urgent manner, he pressed him to summon a general Council. This, however, the political Pontif declined with great obstinacy; nay, he taxed the Emperor with an excess of lenity, and exhorted him as a faithful son of the Church, to extirpate by force the whole body of Heretics. Charles V. judged such

such measures too violent and precipitant, and thought it much more adviseable to proceed with caution and deliberation in a matter of such general moment.

In mean while, Luther, Melancthon, and other eminent Doctors, drew up, by orders of the Elector of Saxony, the capital articles of their religious system, and pointed out in what respects they differed from the Church of Rome. This was executed with singular judgment, elegance and perspicuity, and is known by the name of the Augsburgh Confession. The diet was opened there upon the 20th of June 1530, and by special permission, that famous Confession was read by the Chancellor of Saxony, in presence of the Emperor and all the assembled Princes. It was heard with universal attention, and stamped a deep impression upon the minds of the members. Many seemed surprized as if a new light had darted into them, others were confirmed in their principles of Reformation, and were not a little delighted to see them held forth to view with so much accuracy, and with an eloquent simplicity.

The Confession of Augsburgh was published to the world, and a copy of it delivered into the hands of the Emperor, subscribed by the Protestant Princes and cities.

There was also presented to this august Assembly a remonstrance of the same nature, from the cities of Strasburg, Constance, Memingen, and Lindaw, who had adopted the opinion of Zuinglius in relation to the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and which was drawn up by Martin Bucer in a very masterly manner.

The Roman Pontif employed some Divines to refute the Protestant opinions, all whose arguments were weak and unsatisfactory; and when a copy of the pretended answers was required, this the Emperor

peror refused to grant, with a partiality unbecoming a Prince. This, however, was at last obtained, when learned replies by Melancthon and others were published to the world.

Various schemes of accommodation were proposed in order to bring these religious differences to a conclusion. A mutual toleration was talked of; but this ill suited the temper of the times. As a contrast to this, force of arms was judged by some to be the only expedient; but this was cruel and might prove hazardous. Concessions on both sides, and a friendly compromise could not be expected, considering the heat of party, and the wide difference in many most important articles between the Protestants and Catholics. It was resolved, however, to make a farther experiment by way of conference. Accordingly some eminent persons of both sides had frequent meetings, and many attempts were made to prevent matters from coming to extremity. But the unyielding arrogance and superstition of the Roman See, and the religious resolution and firmness of the Reformers, rendered all reconciliation impracticable. At last, the diet issued a severe decree on the 19th of November, during the absence of the Saxon and Hessian Princes, extolling the excellence of the Popish religion, censuring the innovations that had been introduced, and requiring the Princes, provinces and cities that had withdrawn from the jurisdiction of Rome, to return immediately to a dutiful allegiance, on pain of incurring the vengeance of the Emperor. He, in the mean time, agreed with the Catholic Princes, that they should support, even by force, the execution of this edict.

When the confederate Princes came to consider the unfavourable aspect of affairs, they assembled first at Frankfort, and afterwards at Smalcald, and entered

entered into a solemn mutual alliance for the defence of their religion and liberties. They also invited into this confederacy the Kings of England, France, and Denmark, as likewise other states in Europe. These preparations made no small impression on the Emperor; besides, he was extremely solicitous at that time to obtain succours against the *Turk*, and to get his brother Ferdinand's election as King of the Romans acknowledged by all the German Princes. He therefore was far from being averse to the project of a peace. After many negotiations this was concluded at Nuremberg in the year 1532, between Charles V. and the Protestant confederates. The conditions of the treaty were, That the latter should furnish subsidies for waging war with the Ottoman Porte, and should recognize Ferdinand as lawful King of the Romans. On the other hand, the Emperor bound himself to abrogate the edicts of Worms and Augsburg, and the Lutherans were allowed to enjoy without disturbance the free exercise of their religion, until a rule of faith was fixed in a general Council.

This agreement gave general satisfaction to the Protestants, favoured the cause which they had espoused, and emboldened many cities and provinces, who had not declared themselves, to embrace the Reformation, and to support it with vigour. Charles V. applied again to the Roman Pontif requesting him to call a general Council. But this, Clement VII. artfully evaded for a variety of reasons. His successor Paul III. shewed some greater inclination to comply with the Emperor's demand, and went so far as to send circular letters for convening a Council at Mantua. But the Protestants declared they could not submit to an Italian Council, where every thing would be conducted

conducted by the votaries of Rome : They assembled in a body at *Smalcald* in the year 1537, and there entered a solemn protest against it.

This, with other circumstances, prevented the intended meeting of Council, whilst various measures were tried for the re-establishment of peace and union. But these were disconcerted by the intrigues of Rome, whose agents were secretly at work to blow the flame, and to perplex all counsels or contrivances that did not favour Papal ambition.

The Emperor, regardless of the Roman Pontif, did by his own authority appoint conferences to be held at Worms and Ratibon, where Melancthon displayed a visible superiority of argument and elocution. But nothing definitive was brought to a bearing, both parties stuck to their respective principles and pretensions, and all things apparently tended to an open rupture.

Paul III. intimated a resolution of convening a Council at Trent, and, with consent of the Emperor, issued out mandates for that purpose ; but a convocation at that place, and summoned by the sole authority of the Roman Pontif, the Protestants would not agree to, for reasons which entirely satisfied themselves and the impartial world. Hereupon Charles V. departing from those maxims of moderation he had hitherto adopted, and borne along by the subtle persuasions of the artful Pontif, and promises of powerful assistance from him, espoused sanguinary schemes, and formed a resolution of terminating matters by force of arms.

The Protestant Princes, apprized of these designs, thought it prudent to provide for their own safety, and raised an army for the defence of religion and liberty. At this important juncture of time, Luther, whose fame is justly celebrated through all the

reformed Churches, died in peace, upon the 18th of February, *A. D.* 1546, at Aysleben his native city.

The same year the Council of Trent was convened, against whose authority, the confederate Princes assembled in the Diet of Ratibon, protested in the strongest manner. In consequence of this, they were all proscribed by the Emperor, and he, unfortunately misled by the artifices of Rome, raised a powerful army against them. The Elector of Saxony and Landgrave of Hesse, led their troops into Bavaria, and, with great bravery, cannonaded the Emperor's camp at Ingolstadt. A general action between the two armies was expected to ensue, and many imagined that this would have been favourable for the Protestant party. But various causes contributed to prevent a battle, however ardently this was desired. France had failed in furnishing the stipulated subsidy; some jealousies arose among the confederate Princes through the intrigues of the Emperor; and Maurice Duke of Saxony proved perfidious, who, prompted by ambition, and won over by promises, basely invaded the electoral dominions of his own uncle, whilst he was gallantly defending the interests of Religion and Liberty.

These considerations determined the Elector of Saxony to direct his course homeward. The Emperor by forced marches overtook him at Muhlberg, where a bloody battle was fought on the 24th of April 1547. Victory declared on the side of the Emperor, who defeated the Elector's army which was much inferior in numbers, and made himself prisoner. Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, was prevailed on by the persuasions of Maurice his son-in-law, to throw himself upon the mercy of Charles V. who promised to receive him into fa-

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your and restore him to liberty. Nevertheless he was detained prisoner, contrary to the most solemn engagement, amidst frivolous pretexts and evasions unworthy of a Prince.

This event seemed to portend destruction to the Protestant cause. In the Diet which soon after met at Augsbuurg, the Emperor required the Protestants to leave all religious matters to the decision of the Council at Trent, to which Maurice, now declared Elector of Saxony gave consent, as did also a majority of members. The plague breaking out in *Trent* obliged the assembled Fathers to retire to Bologna, which was construed into a dissolution of the Council, and the Pope was utterly averse from calling another. This suggested to Charles V. the project of appointing a Formula to be drawn up, that might serve as a rule of Faith till a regular Council was summoned, which was accordingly done in an ambiguous manner, and framed so artfully, as to contain all the essential doctrines of the Romish Church, and which, as a temporary expedient only, was called The Interim.

It received the Sanction of the Diet at Augsbuurg, but was acceptable to neither party. Those who refused to submit to it were reduced by force of arms, and the colourings and explanations made use of to palliate matters, produced much misunderstanding, and proved the unfortunate occasion of bloodshed and of many calamities.

Maurice, Elector of Saxony, appeared to observe a kind of neutrality, neither declaring for nor against those who varied in their conduct with respect to the Interim. But in the year 1548, he thought proper to assemble the Saxon Nobility and Clergy at Leipzig, to consider what steps were to be taken in the present critical situation of affairs. Melancthon who was deservedly held in high estimation

mation among them, apprehensive of the Emperor's resentment on the one hand, and on the other, leaning to moderate measures which were peculiarly agreeable to his own mild and pacific disposition, proposed a sort of reconciling overture. He gave it as his opinion, that the Interim could by no means be wholly adopted by the Reformers, but that its authority might be acknowledged in matters of an indifferent nature and not essential in Religion. This was so far from giving general satisfaction, that it proved a source of schism and division, and afforded to the Church of Rome an advantage, which if dextrously improved, might have been highly detrimental, if not fatal to the Protestant cause.

Julius III. succeeding Paul III. in the Pontificate, agreed to convene a Council at Trent, and to this the Diet at Augsburg consented, which was powerfully supported by the presence of an imperial army.

Maurice began to be desirous of regaining the confidence of the Protestant party which he had formerly forfeited, and agreed to the meeting of a general Council at Trent upon certain conditions which he calculated would be favourable to them. He insisted particularly that the decisions of the preceeding Council should be re-examined, that the Protestant Divines should have the privilege of sitting and voting in the New Council, and that the Pope should not preside in it. Accordingly, the Saxon and other Divines, with Melancthon at their head, set forward on their journey, but proceeded no farther than Nuremberg by special orders from Maurice, who now had formed a project of disconcerting all the Emperor's schemes, which at last he accomplished.

Maurice,

Maurice, a penetrating Prince, perceived from a variety of circumstances, that the grand design which Charles V. aimed at, was to encroach upon the liberties of Germany, and by cherishing discord among its Princes, to enlarge his own power and dominion. The Emperor was indeed desirous of clipping the wings of Papal ambition, but it was that he might more easily soar alone and gratify his own aspiring views. And he pushed the project of a Council, not from motives of peace or Religion, but from a confident persuasion that he would be able to direct all its movements, and to convert them to his own ambitious purposes.

Maurice was further particularly piqued at the treatment of his father-in-law, the Landgrave of Hesse, whose liberty, as also that of John Frederick Elector of Saxony, had been solicited in vain by most of the Princes in Europe. He therefore entered into a secret alliance with the French King and several of the German Princes, for supporting the rights and privileges of the empire. Inspired with fresh ardour by this powerful confederacy, he marched a formidable army against the Emperor with amazing rapidity, and surprised him at Inspruck, in an unguarded posture, with a few forces attending him unable to make any resistance. Such an unexpected event alarmed and dispirited Charles to a great degree, so that he found himself obliged to make a peace on any terms. He thereupon not only promised to assemble a Diet within six months, in which all the causes of dissension and tumult should be removed, but concluded at Passau the famous treaty of pacification with the Protestants, *A. D.* 1552. This is esteemed the grand basis of religious liberty in Germany, and was highly favourable to the cause of the Reformation. By it, the Interim was declared null
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and void; the contending parties were to enjoy a free exercise of their religion, until a Diet for determining disputes should be convened; this religious liberty was even always to continue in case an uniformity in doctrine and worship was not amicably agreed to in the Diet; any who had suffered on account of their being concerned in the war of Smalcald, were to be re-instated in their possessions and privileges; and the imperial chamber at Spire was to be constituted of Protestants as well as Catholics. Thus did providence so order matters, that the very Prince who had almost ruined the Protestant cause sometime before, did now appear its firmest friend, and by his address and valour procured a lasting and signal security to it.

This was further confirmed by that Religious Peace, which was concluded at the Diet of Augsb-
burg, opened by *Ferdinand* King of the Romans, in the year 1555, which happily terminated the distressful scenes of war and dissention, that had for a long time afflicted Church and State. This secured to the Protestants the undisturbed enjoyment of their religious liberties upon a stable foundation. They were declared to be exempt from all subjection to the Roman Pontif, and from the authority of the Bishops; they were left at entire freedom to enact laws for themselves, with respect to doctrine, discipline, and worship; all the inhabitants of Germany were allowed to chuse their own religion, as conscience prescribed; and all who should molest or persecute any person for their religious opinions, were declared enemies to the empire, and disturbers of the public peace*. This was a treaty consonant to the principles of reason and of Christianity, and was an eminent benefit,

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* Jo. Schilten Liber de Religiosa Pace.

an illustrious victory obtained by the blessed Reformation.

The Protestant cause flew over Europe, with surprising rapidity and success, and was vigorously supported. This was a matter of vastly higher importance than any that had hitherto subsisted, and able disputants appeared in the controversy, who displayed a great deal of zeal, learning and eloquence. A spirit of enquiry was excited, a freedom of thinking and writing was introduced till now unknown, which mightily contributed to the spread of the Reformation, and to the downfall of Papal superstition.

Ulric Zuingli, a Canon of Zurich, was the great Reformer in Switzerland. He was a man of distinguished learning and of singular resolution, and so early as the year 1516, perceived some rays of truth, exclaimed against the errors of popery, and he soon after concerted schemes of an effectual Reformation. These were crowned with desirable success, so that the greatest number of the Helvetic cantons shook off the Papal yoke.

The doctrines of the Reformation penetrated into the Northern kingdoms, and Luther's disciples met with a most favourable reception amongst them, so that Sweden, Denmark and Norway fell off at once from the Church of Rome, and embraced the Protestant Faith. Gustavus Vasa Ericson, descended of the ancient Kings of Sweden, did, about the year 1531, convene an assembly of the Clergy, caused the confession of Augsborg to be publicly received, and obedience to the See of Rome to be solemnly renounced. He afterwards assembled the States, and recommended the doctrines of the Reformation with such peculiar piety and wisdom, that it was unanimously resolved to admit and establish them. Gustavus exerted him-
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self to bring about this important revolution with a firmness and magnanimity becoming a great Prince, and publicly declared, that he would rather resign his crown, than govern a people so pusillanimous and simple, as to continue slaves to Papal authority, and who would submit to the tyranny of Priests and Bishops, rather than obey the mild and equitable laws of their own Monarch.

The light of the Reformation dawned on Denmark in the year 1521, under Christiern II. His successor Frederic assembled the States of his kingdom, *A. D.* 1527, who published an edict, by which all the subjects were allowed a freedom either to adhere to the Roman Catholic religion, or to embrace the doctrines of Luther. Hereupon the Protestant Clergy exerted themselves with such singular zeal and diligence in their ministerial functions, as to convert the greatest part of the Danes from the errors of Popery. Christiern III. had the honour of giving perfection and stability to the glorious work of the Reformation in his dominions, and it received a solemn sanction from an Assembly of the States at *Odense*, *A. D.* 1539.

In these northern kingdoms, the authority and revenues of the Romish Clergy had risen to an enormous height. Many of the Bishops possessed such territories, towns, castles and fortresses, as rendered them independent on the Crown, enabled them to excite commotions, raise armies, insult their Sovereign, and endanger the State. They lived in luxury and magnificence, affected the pomp and power of Princes. At same time therefore that a reformation in religion itself was established, a wise resolution was taken, to reduce the overgrown wealth and grandeur of that Church, which had, by perfidy and superstition, engrossed the fairest estates of the nobility, and such immense riches, as to render it formidable

formidable to the commonwealth itself, and which, if unaltered, must have proven too potent an adversary to the infant establishment. The Prelatical Order was therefore deprived of their dangerous distinctions and prerogatives, or rather annihilated, their lands and wealth were annexed to the Crown, or restored to an impoverished nobility; and *Superintendants* were appointed, who discharged the spiritual duties of the Episcopal office, without any share of temporal authority.

The Reformation spread soon into Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, France, Britain, the Netherlands and Spain. The Calvinists chiefly settled in the Lower Hungary, and the Lutherans in the Upper. But as these differed only in smaller matters, and both were united against the authority and doctrine of the Church of Rome, they entered into a mutual agreement among themselves for the support of the common cause.

The Battoris or Princes of Transylvania, made some efforts to obstruct the progress of the Reformation, but to no purpose, as it there made its way and maintained its ground.

In Poland it met with the countenance of civil authority; and King Sigismund Augustus did, in the year 1548, allow both Lutheran and Calvinist churches to be settled in his kingdom.

In France, the Reformation made its first appearance at Meaux, *A. D.* 1523. There it made a considerable progress, notwithstanding the most horrid cruelties exercised for the extirpation of it. The famous Calvin soon became the head of the Reformers in that kingdom, drew the attention of the public, and grew into high favour with Margaret Queen of Navarre, sister to Francis I. who was herself warmly attached to the cause of the Reformation. He was born at Noyon in Picardy, on the

10th of July 1509. He first studied at Paris, afterwards at Bourges, where he drank in with admiration the religious opinions of Luther. His genius was extensive and penetrating, his learning deep and diversified, his application indefatigable, whilst all were charmed with his flowing, persuasive eloquence, and struck with his exalted piety. By these accomplishments, his fervent zeal, his numerous writings, and pulpit-oratory, he rose to eminent distinction among the Reformers, and was of signal service in promoting that glorious cause which they had espoused. When Francis I. was committing the greatest outrages against the friends of the Reformation, Calvin found himself obliged to retire out of France, to avoid the impending storm. He took refuge in Geneva, where he was chosen chief Minister; and there he established the Protestant religion, and modelled that Church, both in doctrine, discipline and worship, to a high degree of primitive purity.

The Hugonots, as the Reformers in France were called, multiplied every where, were vigorously supported by some of the greatest Princes in the realm, maintained wars and fought many bloody battles in behalf of religion and liberty, though with various success. Sometimes they enjoyed the auspicious shelter of royal favour, at other times they groaned under the heaviest pressure of persecution. Frequent conferences and councils were held with a view to terminate or soften religious differences.

A famous conference between the Catholics and reformed was opened at Poissy on the 9th of September 1561. The King and Queen, the Duke of Orleans, the King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé and Margaret Queen of Navarre, were present to grace that illustrious Assembly. The Cardinals, Bishops, and Doctors took their places, as did also
twelve

twelve Ministers of the reformed religion. Theodore de Beza was pitched on as the proper person to represent the principles and views of the Reformation, which he did, standing and uncovered. In a long and elaborate discourse, delivered with distinguished spirit and eloquence, he nobly defended the cause in which he appeared, whilst in a victorious manner he refuted the errors and pretensions of Popery. Speaking of the Eucharist, among other things, he said, that the real body of Jesus Christ was as far from the bread and wine, as the highest heaven from the earth.

The Prelates being offended at this assertion, Cardinal de *Tournon* demanded, that Beza should be instantly silenced. But the Queen was pleased to interpose, and insisted that no interruption should be given, and that Beza should be heard at full length. After long and warm debates, the meeting broke up without effecting the principal end for which it was called.

New wars and commotions were excited : The Hugonots were exposed to continual scenes of distress, and suffered as well as performed more for the sake of religion, than perhaps any other part of the reformed Church. At last, Henry IV. King of France, partly from policy, as perceiving it impossible to suppress the Protestant doctrine, or perhaps from motives of religion in part, as he himself had been a Hugonot when King of Navarre, granted to the Reformers a free and universal toleration, by which they were allowed the full liberty of worshipping God according to their consciences, without molestation.

This was confirmed by the famous edict of Nantes in the year 1598, which afforded legal protection and security to the Protestants, both with
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respect to religion, and to civil rights of every kind, and which continued in force till the same was revoked by Lewis XIV. *A. D.* 1685.

The Reformation soon made its way into Britain, and made a mighty progress both in England and Scotland. Although there were a great many people in England, well disposed to the Protestant religion from principle, yet the immediate renunciation of the Pope's authority in that kingdom flowed from another cause. King Henry VIII. in order to shew himself a zealous son of the Church of Rome, had even wrote a book against *Luther* in the year 1521, for which the Pope bestowed upon him the title of *Defender of the Faith*, which is retained to this day by the British Monarchs. Henry was a Prince of parts, and well skilled in philosophy and divinity, but at same time he was of an amorous disposition, and extremely inconstant in his affection.

He had been married 18 years to Catharine of Arragon, relict of his elder brother. Having conceived a violent passion for Anna of Bullen, a celebrated beauty, and entertaining some scruples concerning the legitimacy of his marriage with his brother's widow, he applied to Clement VII. the Roman Pontif, for a dissolution of his marriage with Catharine, and for a dispensation to enter into the connubial state with the illustrious Lady who now engrossed his entire affection. He was for a long time amused with expectations of both. But as the Pope was afraid of provoking the Emperor Charles V. to whom Queen *Catharine* was related, and affected a great many pretexts and evasions, Henry, impatient and affronted, had recourse to another method. He consulted some of the learned Doctors in the European universities upon the subject of his matrimonial scruples, who gave it as their opinion, that wedlock with a brother's widow was

was unlawful. Hereupon Catharine was divorced; and, notwithstanding the Pontif's remonstrances, the English Monarch married Anna Bullen, and assembled a Parliament, who declared him the supreme head of the Church of England, and solemnly renounced the jurisdiction of the Roman See, in the year 1535.

Upon this, the Pope passed a sentence of excommunication against Henry, and declared his newly contracted marriage null and void. The King, resolute in his measures, suppressed a prodigious number of monastries, convents and nunneries, seized on the vast revenues which belonged to them, and with part of them, founded several Protestant bishoprics and colleges; and, although he still adhered to many of the tenets and usages of the Romish Church, yet he paved the way for that more thorough Reformation which took place under his successor Edward VI. *. This extraordinary Prince gave early discoveries of exalted piety and wisdom, and zealously promoted the great work of the Reformation. During his short reign, and by the assistance of Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, as well as of other able and eminent Reformers, this was carried to a considerable degree of perfection, and established by act of Parliament.

It underwent a short but sorrowful eclipse under Queen Mary who succeeded to the Crown. She was a great bigot to the Church of Rome, and of a cruel and arbitrary temper. Intent on the project of restoring Popery, she had recourse to the most bloody and persecuting measures, against all who opposed her violent and superstitious design. Among many others that suffered martyrdom for the Protestant religion during her reign, Cranmer, that illustrious Reformer, and a Prelate of distinguished learning

* *Vide* Bishop Burnet's History of the Reformation of the Church of England.

learning and piety, fell a sacrifice to her unrelenting fury. Providence was pleased to shorten this scene of suffering, which wore so gloomy an aspect inauspicious to the interests of the Reformation. She died in the year 1558, after a reign of five years, and was happily succeeded by Lady Elizabeth, a Princess illustrious for many great and shining accomplishments, and particularly for her zeal in restoring and establishing the reformed Religion.

In the year 1562, she caused a synod or convocation to be assembled at London, in which a Confession of the Protestant Faith was drawn up and agreed upon. In her reign many edicts and acts of Parliament were published against the Catholics, the people were delivered from the bondage of Papal tyranny and superstition, and she established religion with respect to doctrine, worship, and ecclesiastical government, on that footing, which is continued in England to this day. Queen Elizabeth likewise proved the bulwark of the Protestant cause in Europe, and powerfully supported the Protestants in Scotland, France, and the Low Countries. She was extremely desirous that the plan of Reformation which she had introduced, should be universally acknowledged within her dominions, and thereupon the famous act of Uniformity was passed, by which all her subjects were commanded to conform themselves accordingly. But great numbers of them were for refining matters to a still higher degree, were for receding farther even from any appearances of Popery, and cast their eyes upon the churches of Geneva and Switzerland, as models which they ought to imitate, particularly in regard of public worship and ecclesiastical polity. Such went by the denomination of Puritans and Non-conformists, who formed a considerable body, and separated from the established Church. That indeed

deed adopted Calvinism with respect to articles of faith, whilst it retained the Episcopal Hierarchy and some ancient usages. The Puritans or Presbyterians, on the other hand, were for abolishing the Prelatical order and discipline, condemned the Liturgy that was used, the various vestments of the Clergy, the many festival days, and several rites and ceremonies, such as kneeling at the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, using the sign of the Cross in baptism, bowing at the name of Jesus, giving a ring in marriage, nominating god-fathers and god-mothers for the education of children, and the confirmation of them by Episcopal imposition of hands.

In *Scotland* the Reformation made an early appearance. The great doctrines and principles of it had been eagerly imbibed by several of that nation, who had resided in Germany during its progress in that part of the world. Upon their return to their native country, they disseminated with zeal and assiduity the seeds of religious truth, which soon sprang up into a plentiful harvest. The public attention was roused, and books and discourses on such an important controversy were with avidity sought after, and deeply interested multitudes of people. In a little time, great numbers of all ranks and denominations conceived an implacable hatred to Popery, and bravely stood forth in behalf of the Reformation. But they met at first with violent opposition both from Church and State, whilst they encountered difficulties with singular resolution, and some of them suffered even unto death. It was an arduous enterprize to subvert the established religion, a fabric which had been reared with so much art, which had stood its ground for so many ages, that was supported by civil power, defended by a superstitious and self-designing Clergy, that could plead antiquity, possession, prejudice and education; and
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to introduce into the room of this, a new, a pure, and much more perfect system.

To atchieve so noble an exploit, to surmount the obstacles, and to conquer such formidable enemies as opposed it, a skilful and intrepid leader was required. Such a one happily arose in the person of the celebrated John Knox, who boldly stood forth the great Champion of the Reformation among the Scots, and may justly be considered as the illustrious founder of their Church.

He began his public ministry at St Andrews *A. D.* 1547, and by his acting and writing, by the fire of his zeal and the force of his eloquence, so suitable and requisite to the circumstances of the times, bore down all before him *. Knox levelled his blow at the whole system of Popery, and exposed its corruptions and usurpations in their whole extent, with an undaunted and unwearied ardour, with a firmness and fortitude that rose superior to every difficulty, and never feared the face of man †. Providence was pleased to prosper his pious endeavours in a remarkable manner. The Catholic religion was condemned and abolished, the Reformation advanced with speedy steps, and obtained the legal sanction of public authority in Scotland, in the year 1560, under the reign of Queen Mary.

In the year 1566, the Assembly approved in general the Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline adopted by the Churches of Geneva and Switzerland, in contradistinction to the Episcopal Hierarchy and Liturgy. The Earl of *Murray*, Regent of the kingdom in the King's minority, exerted his endeavours to extirpate the Romish religion, and to establish

* Dr Robertson's History of Scotland, Vol. I. p. 111.

† The Earl of *Morton* who attended Knox's funeral, said of him, "There lies One who never feared the face of Man."

blish Calvinism. *James VI.* was bred up in the Protestant Religion, and when he was come of age to assume the reins of government, he maintained the same in his dominions; and in the year 1592, he, by act of Parliament, established, in the most ample manner, Presbyterian Church-Government, by Kirk-sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies *.

It was upon this republican plan that the Reformation was introduced in Scotland †, and the great body of the nation admired it with a kind of sacred zeal, as what was most remote from Popery, and what they apprehended was most congru-

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* The first Book of Discipline composed by Knox and other Ministers as the platform or model of the intended Presbyterian policy, was presented to a Convention of Estates, in the year 1561. The second Book of Discipline was agreed to by the General Assembly 1578. It was revived and ratified by many Acts of different Assemblies, particularly in the year 1638. And it was according to this, that Ecclesiastical Government in Scotland was established by Law, *A. D.* 1592, and 1690, and this still continues to be the standard of Discipline.

† After the abolition of Episcopacy, a few superintendants were indeed appointed for some time, whose proper office it was to inspect the life and doctrine of the Clergy, and to preside in inferior judicatories, which were then in an infant state: But they themselves were subject to a General Assembly, they held no seat in Parliament, and were destitute of Episcopal rank and revenue. In the year 1598, the General Assembly was prevailed on through the intrigues of the Court, to declare it lawful for Ministers to sit in Parliament, and allowed fifty-one persons to be chosen for that purpose, which was about equal to the number of Ecclesiastics who were in ancient times called to Parliament. But then such who were vested with this privilege, were considered as mere representatives of the Church, they were annually chosen from a list of certain Ministers nominated by the Assembly, they were accountable for their conduct to this supreme Judicature, and subject to their jurisdiction, they neither possessed spiritual authority, nor ministerial precedence above their brethren.

ous to the simplicity of the Gospel, and to the practice of the primitive Church.

After the death of Queen Elizabeth in the year 1603, when the Crowns of England and Scotland came to be united in the person of King James VI. he himself espoused the forms of the English Church, and in a more strenuous manner than formerly, obtruded a kind of mixed Episcopacy upon the Scottish nation *, which was productive of great and lasting discontents, and being persisted in, contributed, with other causes, to prove fatal to his son Charles I. Presbyterian government was at last, after many struggles, restored and established in the fullest manner, at the glorious Revolution by King William in 1688, and was solemnly confirmed by the articles of the *Union* under Queen Anne, in the year 1707, and continues to this day †.

The Reformation made a slower progress in *Ireland*. It was introduced into that kingdom under Henry VIII. in the year 1535. Brown, Archbishop of Dublin, exerted his utmost endeavours to expell Papal superstition, destroyed the images and relics that were beheld with a blind veneration by the deluded multitude, laid aside the Romish rites and ceremonies, and established the reformed Religion within his diocese, whilst Henry banished the Monks, and seized their wealth. This good work was farther advanced in the time of Edward VI. and obtained a regular establishment under Queen Elizabeth, when the Irish nation embraced

* Dr Robertson's Hist. of Scotland, vol. II. p. 208, 213, 255.

† By anticipating a few events, some may perhaps think that I depart from the strict laws of Historical Writing; but the restriction of my plan will, I hope, serve for my apology.

braced the same form of doctrine, worship, and discipline which were professed in England, though a great number of Roman Catholics still continue there, who cannot be prevailed on to become Protestants;—such a deep root must Popery have taken amongst them.

The Belgic provinces soon shook off the Papal yoke, and professed the Protestant Religion. About the year 1532, a great many cities and some districts removed the Popish Bishops and Clergy, kindly received the ministers of the Reformation, and readily imbibed the doctrines they taught. Philip II. King of Spain, apprehensive of a revolt, and furiously bigotted to the Church of Rome, enacted the severest laws against all who should attempt innovation in religious matters, and erected in the Low Countries the bloody tribunal of the Inquisition. * The Duke of Alva was sent thither from Spain with a formidable army, which, by his tyrannical orders, committed among the inhabitants the most horrid barbarities. But this cruel and sanguinary conduct, instead of intimidating, exasperated; and a kind of noble enthusiastic ardour, both for civil and religious liberty, spread through the provinces, which rose superior to fear or force. A respectable confederacy was formed under the heroic and illustrious Prince of Orange, William of Nassau, powerfully supported both by England and France, by which they were enabled to maintain a long and bloody war, in defence of their civil and sacred rights. Providence was pleased to smile upon their honourable efforts; they were happily delivered both from the Spanish and Papal yoke, from the bondage of tyranny and superstition,

* The Duke of Alva boasted that in the space of a few years he had dispatched in the Netherlands 36,000 souls by the hand of the common executioner.

superstition, and in the year 1581, the provinces of Holland, Zeland, Friseland, Groningen, Utrecht, Guelderland, and Zutphen, were united into one mighty Republic, and the Protestant Religion, according to the form of Calvinism, was solemnly established.

Even in Spain and Italy, the seeds of the Reformation were early sown in many provinces, and multitudes of people opened their eyes to that light of truth that dawned on the world. This was more remarkable in Venice, Tuscany and Naples. The Neapolitans in particular never would admit the court of Inquisition among them, and even took up arms to oppose some violent attempts that were made with this view. In the year 1546, the aversion of the people against the corruptions and usurpations of the Church of Rome rose to a great height, and various commotions were excited, which it was extremely difficult to appease. Peter Martyr and Bernard Ochino, two eminent preachers, highly distinguished for their zeal and eloquence, exposed with unbounded freedom the errors and superstitions of popery, and roused the indignation of many. The Emperor himself, Charles V. heard *Ochino* preach at Naples with great satisfaction. So much was he struck with his powerful and persuasive oratory, that he declared of this famous minister,—That he preached with such spirit and devotion, as were sufficient to make the very stones weep.

Indeed some have been of opinion that however Charles may have lived, yet he died a Protestant. He may have been fettered for some time by the prejudices of education, and hurried away by ambition, interest, and resentment, when acting a part on the public theatre of the world. But every one is well acquainted with the rare and singular resolution

lution of this illustrious Prince towards the close of life. Though one of the greatest of temporal Monarchs; though he had passed through the most splendid scenes of grandeur, victory, and triumph; though in actual possession of ample revenues and extensive dominions both in Europe and America; yet he voluntarily resigned the imperial diadem and dignity, and all his vast possessions; laid aside his former magnificence, dismissed his pompous retinue, his guards and officers, bid an adieu to courts and camps, to cabals and intrigues, the policy of states and the enterprises of war: He retreated from the world, sequestered himself with a solitary few whom he chose for his friends and favourites, and spent the remainder of his days in humble obscurity, amidst the shade of tranquility, and the repose of religion. Then he, was at leisure and unbiassed, could discern more clearly the errors of superstition, could weigh with more candour, and perceive with greater certainty the important truths of true religion. This seems to have been strongly presumed*. For no sooner did this Monarch expire, than the train of Ecclesiastics who had attended him in his retirement, were seized on by the jealous blood-thirsty Inquisitors, and committed to the flames. This cruel fate *Augustin Casal*, and *Constantine Pontius*, the Emperor's preacher and confessor underwent, as well as several others.

In Italy the progress of the Reformation was very much checked by the proximity of the Roman Pontif, by his various and more immediate connections with the Italian Princes and States, and by the terrors of the Inquisition.

These too, raged and triumphed in Spain, which too soon suppressed a spirit of Reformation, that began to break out, and was diffused among multitudes

* Burnet's History of the Reformation.

tudes of the people. Nay some, who had once been the teachers and defenders of Popery, were themselves converted, became champions for the Protestant religion, and by their zeal and diligence enlightened the minds of many.

For well-attested history informs us, * that Charles V. and his son Philip II. sent some Spanish divines into Germany, England, and Flanders, in order to convert the Protestants in those countries to the Roman faith. But so it was, that they themselves were brought over from the Catholic and embraced the reformed Religion. They were persons eminent for learning and piety, and full of zeal they returned into their native country, there to propagate the Protestant faith. Many illustrious converts were the first fruits of their ministry; but these, with their faithful, pastors were singled out, seized by the hands of merciless Inquisitors, and cruelly sacrificed on scaffolds and at the stake.

But in many other countries the Protestant cause spread its conquests far and wide. Not only were the pillars of popery shaken, but the whole fabric of Romish superstition was demolished. Babylon seemed to fall as a millstone in the mighty waters, and in her room uprose a system of genuine Christianity, which had been hid for ages and generations.

Thus rapid and extensive was the progress of the glorious Reformation, which for its swiftness flew like lightning over the world; but which, for its kindly and beneficent influences, was welcomed after a long night of darkness, as the delightful dawning of chearful day.

Rome beheld this with amazement and anguish, with all the bitterness of false zeal, and all the transports of political rage: Thus to find so rich

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* Dr Geddes's Tracts, vol. I. p. 447, &c.

a spoil hastily plucked out of her hands ; to see so great a part of Europe unexpectedly torn from her, and so many valuable kingdoms and countries hitherto devotees and tributaries to her, at once ravished out of her bosom.

Her authority, her infallibility, her conclaves, and councils, formerly venerable or formidable, were now despised. Her papal bulls and edicts, her excommunications, interdicts, anathemas, and all the thunder of the Vatican, were now treated with contempt. Whole provinces and powerful states, openly broke asunder the chains of ancient superstition, which had formerly fettered them, withdrew publicly from the jurisdiction of the Roman See, and in a constitutional manner erected independant reformed churches of their own.

Rome became apprehensive of her very existence, and dreaded the downfall of the whole papal empire. Many Catholics have without hesitation acknowledged, that the universal ruin of their cause must have ensued, had not the force of the secular arm been called in to support their tottering situation, and fire and sword been let loose upon those who were only brandishing the weapons of reason and argument.

The most cruel engines were set to work, and recourse was had to the meanest and most malicious methods of assault. The Roman Pontifs, and their adherents, inflamed with all the rage of resentment, encouraged secret assassinations and private conspiracies, open tumults and insurrections ; set on foot the most dreadful persecutions, played off the infernal tortures of *Inquisition*, and excited wars and commotions in many places, in order to uphold the sinking system of superstition, and to bear down by violence that spirit of Reformation, which they could not otherwise repress or subdue.

Besides

Besides what has been occasionally glanced at, and many other instances that might be mentioned, witness the barbarous massacre of Paris under Charles IX. on Bartholomew's day, the 24th of August 1572, when 100,000 Protestants were butchered in France, in the space of one week.

Witness the horrid conspiracy formed in England in the reign of James I. (though providentially prevented) of blowing up the Parliament-house at London with gun-powder, and destroying a Protestant Prince, Protestant Lords and Commoners, upon the 5th of November 1605.

Witness the rebellion in Ireland, when about 150,000 Protestants were murdered, under the reign of Charles I. *A. D.* 1641.

These sanguinary counsels, such cruel proceedings, did no doubt greatly impede and interrupt the farther advancement of the Reformation.

For, considering how suitable this was to the justest notions of religion, and how strongly it was founded upon principles of civil as well as of religious liberty, it was not unreasonable to expect, that being once introduced, it would have spread its triumphs every where through Christendom. Nor was it unnatural to think, that Sovereign Princes would have been very well disposed to have rendered themselves still more despotic in their own kingdoms, and even upon a political account, abstracting from religious considerations, been averse from tolerating any longer within their dominions a system, which demanded and drew the allegiance of their subjects to a foreign Power, yea, claimed a subjection of conscience too sacred to have been sacrificed even to a natural Prince.

Yet so it was, that a great part of the world still continued, and to this day remains enslaved to the tyranny and superstition of Rome.

Besides

Besides the unhappy influence which wars and persecutions raised against the Protestants, had to intimidate some, and to cool the zeal of others, various other causes contributed to retard the growth of the Reformation.

Whilst many might be indifferent as to all religion, or unsollicitous about the character or form of that which they professed, others would be biased by early prejudices of education, and strong prepossessions in favour of the ancient mother-church.

Secular views, political connections, worldly interest, ease, and security, would operate upon multitudes.

Spain judged it adviseable to protect the Holy See, as the Pope's alliance and authority might be of great service in preserving its dominions in Italy. If the prospect of seizing the revenues of the Church induced any to promote the Reformation, the actual possession of them and the fear of losing them, engaged others to stand fast to the interests of Rome. The Bishops in France united more closely with the Roman See, at the time of the Reformation, than they had formerly done, for fear of being deprived of their ecclesiastical dignities and benefices.

Some Sovereigns were so situated, as to have reason to dread civil confusion and embroilment, did they attempt a change in religion; and in some places a deluded populace, and a superstitious interested Clergy wholly dependent upon, and devoted to the See of Rome, would be ready to move heaven and earth against them.

In Germany, great temporal power is annexed to many bishoprics, and other ecclesiastical benefices, which would not be easily resigned, and the secular Princes might be drawn to attach them-

selves to the Romish communion, from hopes of reaching the Imperial dignity.

The Italian States are more directly under the eye of the Roman Pontifs, and derive a kind of lustre and influence from their residence amongst them; the Princes have intimate connection with the court of Rome; the nobility who enter into the Church are sure of promotion in it, and many of them have an eye to the Papal chair, as none but Italians are advanced to that dignity.

But further, it must be remembered, that the Reformation was rather a sudden and unexpected event, which should lead to the acknowledgment of a more immediate Providence, than the effect of a long and deep projected plan, that had, by previous deliberation and concert, cut out every action, and distributed the execution into proper hands, that had maturely digested the bold and arduous enterprize, laid the whole train of procedure, and set in motion all the springs with art and union.

Besides, the Church of Rome was concentered in one infallible Head. The Protestant Princes, by the very principles which they professed, could not be linked together by such an indissoluble band, and acting as free and independent Sovereigns without a common head, at same time pleading for freedom of conscience, were more at liberty to prosecute their own several schemes of Reformation. This, however, it is evident, would give their enemy a considerable advantage over them, especially as they had been in long possession; whilst the other were struggling for new opinions, and for the establishment of a new system.

Different sects and parties likewise arose among the Protestants themselves, distinguished by various names, Lutherans and Calvinists, Zuinglians, Anabaptists, Episcopalians and Presbyterians. All the reformed

formed Churches agreed in this general principle, That the Scriptures of Truth, infallible in all things, were the sole standard of religion, by which all matters were to be determined. But then they sometimes differed in their explanations and inferences.

The Lutheran Church, for instance, holds that the Body and Blood of Christ are materially present in the Eucharist, though in an incomprehensible manner, whilst the Calvinists and Zuinglians consider the Bread and Wine as sacred symbols only of the Body and Death of Christ.

The Lutherans maintain that the Eternal Decrees of God, which respect the salvation or misery of mankind, are founded on a previous knowledge of their conduct and character; whilst the Calvinists consider the Divine Decrees as free and unconditional, as resting on the mere will of Deity, abstracting from the views or actions of the creature.

The Lutherans make large concessions as to matters of an external nature, and what they judge indifferent, such as images for the adorning of churches, various vestments for the Clergy, private confession of sins, the use of wafers in the Sacrament of the Supper, and the form of exorcism in the administration of Baptism, with a variety of other ceremonies.

The Calvinists are for retrenching superfluous rites and observances, and would reduce all things in religion to pure and primitive simplicity.

With respect to ecclesiastical polity and discipline, various sentiments are entertained amongst the Reformed, some admiring the splendor of Episcopal Hierarchy, whilst others prefer Presbyterian parity.

Thus schism and controversy were produced, though about matters of inferior importance; nor would it be easy, considering the frame of human nature,

nature, to seclude all mixtures of an heterogeneous kind, which, though entirely extrinsic from the merits of the cause itself, might yet have a bad effect. Something of a party spirit might appear, which, with the heat of argument and contest, would abate fraternal affection and reciprocal confidence, serve to divide the attention of Protestants, and to diminish their zeal against the common foe.

Some have been of opinion, that had the Reformers, particularly Zuinglius and Calvin, been content at first to have only combated and relinquished absolutely dangerous errors in Popery, and tolerated some of her mere external forms and usages, the transition to the great body of the Reformed would have been rendered more easy, and less offensive to vulgar minds, too sensibly struck with outward shew and appearance. Nor could the multitude, as some would represent matters, be all at once reconciled to a Religion which was exhibited in a naked light, and stript of those splendid appendages and decorations, which had for a long time past dazzled their eyes and imaginations. But if this was any where the case, we are apt to believe, that directly contrary views operated in other places, and rather forwarded the Reformation, particularly in Geneva and Switzerland, the United Provinces, and Scotland.

With regard to the extent and power of Popery and Protestantism, it is not so easy to form an exact estimate.

All Italy, Spain, and Portugal, the greatest part of France, Poland, Hungary, some of the Swiss Cantons, and about two-thirds of Germany, are devoted to the See of Rome. On the Protestant side stand Great Britain and Ireland, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, the greatest part of Switzerland, and a considerable part of Germany. There are likewise

likewise great numbers of Hugonots in France; there are multitudes of the Reformed in Poland; and Prussia is in a good measure become a Protestant kingdom. In Courland, Hungary, and Transylvania, the number of Protestants is very considerable.

However, when one considers the gross superstition and despotism of the Church of Rome, the false foundations upon which it is built, the numberless stratagems and contrivances by which this artificial fabric is supported; and on the other hand, that the Reformed Protestant Religion stands upon the principles of truth, is founded on the sacred rights of private conscience and public liberty, and is favourable both for Princes and people; it is to be hoped, upon these accounts, as also from prophetic declarations of Scripture, that the total ruin and downfall of Popery are not extremely remote. There are many good grounds to expect, that the eyes of the whole world will at last be opened to discern the truth, and that they will abhor and abjure that delusion and tyranny, by which they have been so long held in chains, and animated with noble motives of true Religion and liberty, espouse the cause of the blessed Reformation, so auspicious to both.

Thus, unwilling to disunite this very important subject, I have thrown together what appeared to me most instructive and interesting in one connected view.

We must now return back a little, to take notice of a few things not improper to be mentioned. The Popish Bishops and Clergy, being greatly alarmed at the progress of the Reformation, devised every method that could be thought of, and employed their utmost efforts to obstruct it. Among others of a more violent or insidious nature, they had

had likewise resort, especially at first, to frequent councils, provincial, national, and general.

One particularly was held at Paris, and another at Bourges in 1528; one at Cologne in the year 1536, and a second in the same place, in 1549.

A council was convened by Cardinal Otton, Bishop of Augsburgh, at Dillingen in 1548; one assembled at Mentz, and another at Treves, in the year 1549. In these and many other councils that might be mentioned, the members proceeded with great zeal, and not only condemned the doctrines of the Reformation, which they were pleased to call by the names of Schism and Herefy, but also drew up particular decrees relating to faith, and published canons with respect to the usages and discipline of the Romish church, in contradistinction to the tenets and principles of the Reformers.

A general council had been appointed to meet at Trent, as formerly noticed, which was accordingly opened on the 13th of December 1545. After various adjournments or suspensions, it was convened a-new in May 1551, and was again opened in January 1562.

At first it was chiefly composed of Italian and Spanish Prelates, but afterwards the Bishops from France and other Catholic kingdoms likewise came up to it. In this council they confirmed the whole system of Popery, guarded it by a great number of decrees and canons, condemned the doctrines, writings, and proceedings of the Reformers, endeavoured to colour over by the varnish of vague, ambiguous expressions, some of their own most obnoxious tenets, and appointed various regulations with respect to discipline and manners; particularly those of the ecclesiastical Orders, who were sunk into great dissoluteness and profligacy. But any decisions which had a tendency to restrain or reform abuses, were
not

not duly supported by the authority of the Church, but allowed to fall into desuetude, whilst those which served to promote the pre-eminence of the Roman Pontifs, and the absurdities of Romish superstition, were sacredly maintained.

The assembled Fathers were borne down or cajoled by the intrigue and influence of the Roman Legates who presided amongst them, and who were more intent to get every thing decided that might be favourable to the See of Rome, than by the principles of right reason and sound Christianity. Instead of acknowledging the sole authority of Scripture in matters of religion, as Protestants do, they admitted and put upon a level with this, oral tradition, avowed the supreme authority of the Church, and the infallibility of the Pope, who, as Christ's Vicegerent, had the proper power and title to explain both the written and unwritten word. This at once breaks down the sacred fence and security of Divine truth, and flings open a wide door for delusion and imposition of every kind.

Nay, encouragement is given to those who appear as champions for the Catholic Faith, to declare, as too many have done in a most blasphemous manner, that the edicts of the Roman Pontifs and the assertion of oral tradition, are of higher authority than Scripture itself. Whilst the Church of Rome seals up the sacred fountains of truth, so far as they can, in an unknown tongue, and goes the length of affirming that the Bible was not composed for the use of the multitude, but for their ghostly rulers and teachers; the council of *Trent* passed a solemn decree, with a view to deprectate that holy Book, and to advance their own despotic designs, declaring that the ancient Latin translation of the Scriptures, commonly called the *Vulgate*, is an authentic, accurate and perfect translation, though

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though it confessedly abounds with many errors of a very gross kind, and wraps up the real meaning of the inspired writers, in an affected barbarism and obscurity of language.

Such were the proceedings of the council of Trent, as to give offence to many Divines even of the Catholic communion. Their decrees were indeed implicitly acknowledged in Italy, Germany and Poland, but in other countries they were not so fully adopted, as infringing upon the prerogatives of Princes, and the privileges of the churches established in their dominions.

* The decisions and canons of this council were signed by 245 Prelates, and the Pope confirmed them without exception or restriction, by his bull of 26th January 1564. The Protestant Princes and States would by no means acknowledge the Council of Trent, but faithfully adhered to the confession of Ausburgh, or the still more enlarged principles of the Reformation.

When the Roman Pontiffs observed, how much their own glory and the majesty of their church were eclipsed by the losses they had sustained, and by the progress of that opposition which was now made to their authority, they judged it proper to found a new religious fraternity, that should be entirely devoted to their interests, and the purpose of whose institution should be, to support the Papal throne, and to propagate the Romish religion. This became the more necessary, as the two famous mendicant societies of Dominicans and Franciscans, who had for ages past held such an universal sway, were now upon the decline, and incapable of acting with their accustomed vigour. What was so earnestly sought for, was found in the powerful and ingenious Order of Jesuits, *A. D.* 1540. Their founder

* Du Pin's Eccles. Hist. Vol. IV. p. 118.

founder was Ignatius Loyola, a Spanish Knight, who, from a soldier, became an extraordinary fanatic, at same time that he was a man of an uncommon and enterprizing genius. }

The members of this society hold a middle rank between the regular and secular Clergy. They indeed live in convents, and are bound by certain religious vows, yet they are exempt from many burthensome services to which other Monastic orders are subject, and are allowed more leisure, free converse, and a greater range in the world, that so they may better promote the professed ends of their institution. Accordingly, they spread and multiplied with amazing rapidity, through all the kingdoms and countries of the world, and from their commanding influence has the Court of Rome derived wonderful aid and support, whilst they, on the other hand, have been highly favoured, and, in respect of worldly wealth and grandeur, singularly fortunate.

In every controversy with the Romish church they have appeared as the most zealous champions to defend her doctrines and justify her claims, and to attack with boldness, as deceived, and heretics, all who presume to oppose Papal power and superstition. They excel in subtlety and eloquence, are great adepts in policy and state-intrigue, and by their knowledge, art, and enterprizing spirit, their versatility of temper, and dexterity of conduct, they ingratiate themselves with the rich and powerful, insinuate into the secrets of families, and even the cabinet of Princes. They take upon them to modify the doctrines and to relax the rules of Religion, so as to suit themselves to every company and please every society; and thus they multiply proselytes, by shading the severe aspect of morality, and mak-

ing many large concessions *. They have indeed made vigorous efforts, and performed many exploits in all parts of the globe, for the conversion of infidels, especially in America, Africa, and India. And their labours would have been entitled to immortal glory, had they been honestly and conscientiously directed. But authentic records inform us, that these Jesuitical apostles had not so much in view the propagating the religion of Jesus, as making partizans to Popery, and that they were much more attentive to secular schemes by which they might enrich and aggrandize their own Order, than in reforming the manners or enlightening the minds of men.

They acquired immense possessions and treasures at home and abroad, entered into cabals and factions, excited tumults and dissensions, and became extremely licentious and dangerous. At last they rose to such a pitch of opulence, power, policy, and enormity, as to give great offence to the Pontiffs themselves; they became objects of envy to the other ecclesiastical Orders, and of hatred and jealousy in the kingdoms where they resided. They governed with a kind of uncontrollable sway for the space of two centuries, when the dissolution of their society was absolutely determined, as being no longer supportable, and when final ruin rushed upon them, unexpected and inevitable.

Different states and countries concurred all at once, to fix on them a blot of indelible infamy, and to declare them enemies of the public, traitors, and parricides. In the year 1763, the Jesuits were banished Portugal and Prussia. In 1764 they were expelled the kingdom of France: In 1766, they were driven out of Bohemia and Denmark; in

1767,

* Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. Eng. by Dr Maclain, vol. IV, p. 354, 355.

1767, they were banished the dukedoms of Mantua, Parma, and Milan, the republics of Genoa and Venice, and the Spanish dominions in America and Asia; they were forbid to enter the Catholic cantons in Switzerland, and they were restrained in Florence. At length, by a bull of Clement XIV. dated at Rome the 25th of August, *A. D.* 1773, the whole society of the Jesuits was entirely suppressed*.

All the Divines of this century were educated in the school of controversy, and indeed all the countries of Europe were in a state of religious agitation. The great revolution brought about by means of the Reformation, produced a general attention, set an edge upon mens spirits, made them enter into manifold disquisitions, and into all the heat of contest and argumentation. That this should have been the case between Papists and Protestants is less surprizing, and that some of the latter should have expressed themselves with vehemence and asperity, was not unnatural, considering the calumnies raised against them, the injustice they frequently met with from their implacable enemies, and what horrid cruelties of fire and sword the holy instruments of the Reformation had suffered. Besides, allowances are to be made for the taste and genius of those unpolished times, which were just emerging from a state of barbarism. But though we need not wonder, yet we may regret, that many warm disputes and differences arose among the Reformed themselves, especially between the Lutherans and Calvinists. These multiplied to a considerable degree; some of them were more important, many of them related to points of an
abstruse

* The brevity of my plan, will, I hope, justify such short anticipations as these; besides, I find such things are occasionally done by good historians.

abstruse or metaphysical nature, others to external forms and usages ; and it must be candidly owned that parties became too violent and uncharitable.

All who wished well to the interests of the Reformation ardently desired to see an end of these home-bred contentions, especially as the Roman Catholics availed themselves of such dissensions. With this view, and to give, in a more particular manner, union and consistency to the Lutheran Church, various healing overtures were projected. Many convocations and conferences were held, especially among the Saxon doctors, at the earnest desire of Augustus, Elector of Saxony, and other personages of distinction. The principal one which gave the prospect of an amicable compromise, took place at Torgaw, in the year 1576, the result of which was the famous Form of Concord which was published at Berg.

It was adopted by the Saxons, and by a great many Lutheran churches, but did not produce those fruits of peace and harmony that were expected. The Calvinists opposed it with great warmth, as unfavourable to them, and to the friends of religious liberty in general ; and even many Lutheran churches were highly dissatisfied with it, and with great firmness rejected it, particularly those of Hesia, Denmark, Silesia, Brunswick, Holstein, Nuremberg, Pomerania. Besides various other articles contained in it, those more remarkably gave offence, which ascribed too much to the freedom of the human will, and which asserted in too strong terms, the corporal presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

Various attempts were made from time to time to abolish the Form of Concord ; and the demanding a subscription to it as a condition of church-communion, was looked on as an unreasonable imposition

imposition which could not be submitted to. Thence arose many tumults and controversies which very much disturbed the repose of the reformed churches. It was therefore solemnly suppressed in many places, and in process of time, and by the mediation of eminent doctors and respectable personages, it lost its authority, and fell into desuetude.

So recently as in the year 1718, when disputes began to be revived concerning it in Switzerland, more especially in the canton of Bern, these rose to such a height, as to engage George I. King of Great Britain and the States-general of the United Provinces to interpose, in order to terminate those unhappy divisions which had been occasioned, and which were like to have proved productive of further disturbance. This had a happy effect, and brought it again into general discredit.

Even before the appearance of Luther and Calvin, there lay concealed many persons in most of the countries in Europe, particularly in Germany, Switzerland, Bohemia, and Moravia, who held peculiar and enthusiastical notions in Religion; and soon after the Reformation, these broke forth more openly, and pretended to carry matters a great deal farther, beyond the limits of reason and the principles of society. Such in a more remarkable manner were the Anabaptists, whose progress was alarming; some of whose tenets were extremely dangerous, whilst they were guilty of the most irregular practices, and spread the scenes of war, tumult and confusion in many places. Among other novelties they maintained,—That the visible Church of Christ was to be exempt from all sin; that every thing ought to be in common among the faithful; that all tithes and tribute should be abolished; that every Christian had a power to preach the Gospel; that pastors and ministers were unnecessary; that the

the baptism of infants was sinful; that civil magistrates were entirely useless in the kingdom of Christ; that he was soon in person to reign upon earth; and that God still revealed his will to men by dreams and visions.

Despising the prudent and more pacific proceedings of the Reformers, they had recourse at once to sanguinary measures, and declared war against all laws and magistrates, under a fanatical pretext that Christ himself was to assume the reins of civil and ecclesiastical government.

In the year 1525, they raised a numerous army, mostly composed of the peasants of Saxony, Swabia, Franconia, and Thuringia. These were led on by Munzer, a man of intrepid resolution, yet over-run with enthusiasm; but their career was stopped by the Elector of Saxony and other confederate Princes, who routed and dispersed them, and put to death their fanatical ring-leader. This, however, did not check their bold and resolute spirit. Their numbers multiplied, especially in Germany, Holland, and Switzerland, where they endeavoured to excite the people to rebellion, and committed the most outrageous actions.

In the year 1533, a great number of the most furious Anabaptists made themselves masters of the city of Munster in Westphalia. They gave themselves out for the inspired messengers of heaven, overturned all the established institutions, sacred and political, and pretended to form a spiritual republic, the capital of which was to be the city they now possessed, that was as a new Jerusalem to rule over all the earth. They placed at the head of affairs John Bockholt, a native of Leyden, a man of a very visionary complexion, artful, ambitious and daring. Their empire continued, however, but for a short season. For in the year

1535,

1535, the Bishop of Munster and several German Princes besieged the city, which stood it out for a long time. At last they made themselves masters of it, inflicted a most ignominious death upon the mock-monarch, and devoted to destruction a prodigious number of his fanatical followers.

This was a dreadful blow given to the cause of the Anabaptists; but Menno Simon, a native of Friesland, revived their spirits, and undertook their defence. He was a person of extraordinary talents, of no inconsiderable learning, and of persuasive eloquence. During the space of 25 years, he travelled from one country to another with his wife and children, teaching and preaching wherever he came. He assumed an air of singular sanctity, recommended the practice of religion and morality to all, and though formerly a great profligate, became an eminent example of virtue. Thus he attracted the admiration of the multitude, and gained many proselytes. He new-modelled the doctrines, and refined the notions of the Anabaptists, entirely excluded from his system their gross and dangerous opinions, and gave a softening to any peculiar tenets which it was thought proper to retain, such especially as related to Baptism and Immersion, the Millennium, the prohibition of oaths, and the abolition of war. Hereupon the Mennonites discarded from their communion the wild and rebellious Fanatics who were ready to rise against government, to condemn laws human and divine, and to give into licentious courses. In process of time, however, the Anabaptists split into various parties and classes, several of their peculiarities were laid aside, and in some places, particularly in England, they are only distinguishable on account of their religious singularity in administering Baptism solely to adult persons

sons by Immerſion, whence they are frequently denominated Baptiſts, or Antipædobaptiſts.

It was about the year 1546, that the hereſy of Socinianiſm ſprang up, and ſpread into many countries, particularly in Poland and Moravia. It was derived from Lælius Socinus, who ſettled at Zurich, and propagated his opinions with conſiderable ſucceſs. Theſe were formed into a more regular ſyſtem by Fauſtus Socinus his nephew and heir, and attacked ſome of the eſſential articles of Chriſtianity. The Socinians denied the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and the Divinity of our Saviour. They own him to have been an illuſtrious Prophet, at ſame time teach, that he was born of the Virgin Mary, a mere, though extraordinary Man; and they affirm that the Holy Ghoſt does not conſtitute a diſtinct perſon, but is only a ſimple virtue or attribute of Deity, neither do they acknowledge his Divine Agency upon the minds of men.

They exalt the powers of man, and aſſume as a fundamental principle, that every thing in religion muſt come within the graſp of the human intellect, and that nothing ſhould be admitted which exceeds our underſtanding. Thus, though they acknowledge the ſacred original of the Scriptures, yet they file them down and conſtrue them after their own manner, and take a licentious liberty in modifying the doctrines of the goſpel, ſo as to ſuit their own contracted notions and imperfect views. They open a wide door for error, and an endleſs variety of religions; as the faculties of the human mind in individuals are as various in reſpect of extent and capacity as the faces of mankind. They do not conſider the narrow limits of human comprehension, the feebleneſs of our frame, what inadequate conceptions we have of every thing around us, and even of our very ſelves; that there is an important difference

difference betwixt a partial and a perfect perception of truth, and that it is highly just and proper, that the reason of man should stoop to the revelations of heaven.

Injurious as these *Unitarians* were by their principles and proceedings, to fair criticism, to true philosophy, and sound Christianity, yet were their notions adopted by many. Their leaders exerted themselves with unwearied zeal, published many books with a view to support their system, but which had a tendency to pervert the Scriptures, and detached a number of Missionaries into different countries, to make proselytes and erect congregations. They differed from other sects in the manner of propagating their opinions. For while most address themselves to the vulgar, and endeavour to obtain popularity, these principally applied to persons of rank and wealth, and courted the patronage of learned men. }

Yet did not they escape the severest censure, and the warmest opposition. Many elaborate treatises were published for their refutation, and the world beheld an unusual spectacle, when Catholics, Calvinists, and Lutherans, forgetting their peculiar dissentions, united as one body to bear down the the growth of Socinianism.

The *Seventeenth* century opened with a very important contest which arose between Paul V. and the Republic of Venice. The Senate had enacted two wise laws in the year 1605, prohibiting the erection of any new religious houses within their dominions, as also the alienation of any lay-possessions in favour of the Clergy, without their express knowledge and consent. They had likewise imprisoned two Ecclesiastics, and commenced a prosecution against them for capital crimes. Such procedure, however equitable and proper, was by

no means agreeable to an arrogant and imperious Pontif, who stiled himself Vice-God, and Monarch of Christendom. Accordingly, in a rage of resentment, he laid the whole Venetian State under an Interdict, for thus presuming to encroach upon Papal power and jurisdiction. The Venetians highly incensed at such an arbitrary and tyrannical measure, declared it null and void, and banished the Jesuits and Capuchins for yielding obedience to the Pope's mandate. All things tended to an open rupture, and Paul V. was preparing to make war upon the Republic, whilst their Senate on the other hand were concerting schemes for a total separation from the Church of Rome, to which they were warmly prompted by the English and Dutch Ambassadors. In this crisis of affairs, an accommodation was brought about by the mediation of Henry IV. of France *, to whose Ambassador the two Ecclesiastics were delivered, whilst his Holiness recalled the censures he had inflicted.

Upon this occasion, many elaborate performances were produced, concerning the nature and boundaries of civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction, which served to open the eyes of Princes and Magistrates, and diffused notions very unfavourable to the pretensions of Papacy. The matter was considered as a common cause, in which all the Sovereign States of Italy were interested; the Dukes of Modena, Savoy and Urbina, were so roused as even to offer a considerable succour of men and money for supporting a war against the Pope; and from that time the Court of Rome lost much of its credit and influence with the Venetian Republic, which it has never been able to recover. But the Roman Pontifs were extremely solicitous to maintain their pretended privileges, and employed the most able

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* Du Pin's Eccles. Hist. Vol. IV. p. 175.

pens to assert and defend them. Among these, Cardinal *Bellarmino* distinguished himself in his zeal for the Romish Church. And though he seemed to admit but an indirect power in the Pope with respect to temporals, and did not go all the length which some others did, yet he drew the same kind of consequences, and affirmed that Heretical Princes, or such as rebelled against the Church, might be deposed, and forfeit their civil rights.

The Portuguese did not act with the same vigour and wisdom which had distinguished the noble Venetians.

When about the year 1640, they had thrown off the yoke of Spanish tyranny and oppression, and elected for King, Don John, Duke of Braganza, the Roman Pontiffs obstinately refused to recognize his title, or to confirm the Bishops which he had promoted to the vacant Sees. Several European Princes advised him to imitate the example of the Venetian Senate, and to act independently of the Holy Father. Neither was he wholly averse to such a resolute measure; but the extravagant superstition of the people, and the terrors of the Inquisitorial Tribunal, damped his spirit, and prevented the enterprize. Hence it came to pass, that the Popes of Rome continued to insult the court of Portugal till the year 1666, when an accommodation was brought about under Clement IX. after a treaty of peace had been concluded between the Spaniards and Portuguese, in consequence of a decisive victory which the latter had obtained at Villa Viciosa over Philip IV. who renounced all pretensions to the Crown of Portugal.

During the course of this century, many differences likewise arose between the French Monarchs and the Roman Pontiffs; and indeed for a long time before this period, the liberties and privileges
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of the Gallican church were a constant object of envy and uneasiness to the Popes of Rome.

Whilst the Jesuits exerted all their art and dexterity in supporting the power and pretensions of the Romish See, the Parliament of Paris boldly stood forth in behalf of the Gallican church, and on various occasions disconcerted the designs and humbled the arrogance of Pontifical pride. The French indeed maintain the religious system of Popery, and their opposition is chiefly directed against the personal infallibility of the Roman Pontiffs, their overgrown power and ambition, their interfering with the rights of Princes, and encroaching upon temporal matters. At same time, they lay it down as a maxim in all their differences with the See of Rome, to proceed with mildness and moderation, though this is contrary to the characteristic of their national temper in other matters, which inclines them to clamour and noise, and impetuosity of action.

In their negotiations with his Holiness, they affect a kind of veneration, and show an obsequiousness in smaller points, with a view to obtain, in a silent and easy but yet effectual manner, more substantial advantages. This led that celebrated author Voltaire, to remark with his usual vivacity, That the French Monarch kisses the Pope's toe, but takes care to tie up his hands.

The Church of Rome, notwithstanding its boasted uniformity of doctrine, has always been divided by a multiplicity of religious opinions and controversies. Those concerning grace, predestination, human liberty, and original sin, were now revived, and carried to a great height, and were occasioned by a book wrote by Lewis Molina a Spanish Jesuit. The opinions of this Divine were, That God Almighty does not predestinate men to eternal happiness,

ness, but in view and consideration of their good works: That the grace of God operates in conjunction with free will: That men have it in their power to comply with or to resist Divine grace; and that this grace is not denied to any.

He introduced a new kind of hypothesis, in order to shew the consistency of Divine influence with free agency, and to reconcile the jarring notions of the Augustinians, Semi-Pelagians, Thomists, and other Polemical Divines.

These doctrines were fiercely attacked by the Dominicans; they were for some time agitated in the schools, then carried to the tribunal of Inquisition, and afterwards referred by the Archbishop of *Toledo* to the Pope himself. Many conferences and warm debates took place with regard to these intricate subjects: And upon various occasions, from the year 1594 to 1625, decrees were passed imposing silence and prohibiting any publications on these nice and controverted articles. But this did not produce the desired effect; the flame increased, a number of treatises were sent abroad into the world, and many disputants appeared in the field of controversy.

Fresh fuel was added by the publication of a book entitled *Augustinus*, about the year 1640. It was composed by Cornelius Jansenius Bishop of *Ypres*, who revived the doctrine of Augustine concerning the virtue and extent of Christ's death, the corruption of mankind, and the nature and efficacy of divine grace, which approached nearly to the opinions of Calvin. Great numbers embraced this system, and the Dominicans in particular became violent Partizans for it. On the other hand, the whole order of Jesuits opposed it with the utmost vehemence, as contrary to their scheme of doctrine, and because it was patronized by the Dominicans

Dominicans, to whom they bore an implacable enmity. Not content with exposing it by argument and writing, they employed their interest at Rome to obtain from the Pope a solemn condemnation of Jansenius's book. In this they were not unsuccessful, and Urban VIII. issued a bull declaring it infected with several errors. Jansenism, however, spread and prevailed in many places, particularly in France and the Netherlands, created warm contests and much disturbance. The Jesuits, not satisfied with the victory they had obtained, did, in the year 1653, single out five propositions from the works of Jansenius which appeared to them most erroneous, and prevailed on Innocent X. formally to condemn them. These contained the following articles: That there are some of the divine commands, which the righteous are unable to obey, nor does God grant them that degree of grace which may enable them to yield such obedience; that no person can resist the influence of divine grace; that to merit and demerit in the present state of lapsed nature, it is not requisite that man should enjoy a freedom from necessity, but from constraint; that the Semi-Pelagians err in maintaining, that the human will may either receive or resist the energy of preventing grace; that to say that Jesus Christ shed his blood for all mankind without exception, is Semi-Pelagianism.

Hereupon the followers of Jansenius alledged that these propositions were not to be found in his book, or at least, not in the sense in which they had been condemned. The Jansenists affect singular austerity in their manner of living, observe a rigorous discipline, exclaim against the corruptions of the Church and the licentiousness of the Clergy. They maintain that the scriptures and liturgies should be offered to the people in their mother-tongue

tongue, and that religion does not consist in external rites and observances, but inward holiness and divine love. At same time, they are chargeable with many faults and false notions resembling those of the Mystics, lay a great stress upon bodily penance, and look upon such who have by maceration and abstemiousness hastened their death, as so many noble victims to religion, by which they atone for their own sins, and derive blessings to others. Of much the same stamp were the Quietists, Pietists, and other fanatical sects, who pretended to be wise above what was written, and took upon them to prescribe rules and laws, which are not commanded in the word of God. Perhaps they may have had a good intention, and some among them may have been carried to sublime heights of devotion, while amidst their extatic ardors and seraphic contemplations, they lost sight of the active duties of religion, were tinged with enthusiastical notions, and recommended a regimen of life inconsistent with humanity, the present state of the world, and the genuine system of gospel-truth taken in its whole extent.

Among the Protestants various controversies of a religious nature likewise subsisted, which attracted the attention of the world, and employed many able disputants. The academy of Geneva had flourished for a considerable time, and such were its lustre and reputation, that students of theology in a special manner resorted to it from all the reformed countries. Hence it happened, by means extremely natural, that the doctrines of Calvin respecting the decrees of God and divine grace gradually gained ground. Yet even among the Calvinists themselves, some were of opinion, that God did only permit Adam's fall and the commission of sin, without supposing any positive decree; whilst others

others maintained that the transgression of Adam was absolutely decreed, and that it was impossible for him to avoid it. These who asserted the latter were denominated Supralapsarians, whilst the other were designed Sublapsarians.

About the year 1605, James Arminius, Professor of Divinity in the university of Leyden, openly rejected and endeavoured to refute the opinions of Calvin with respect to election and reprobation, justification, grace, and perseverance; and with the Lutherans maintained, that God Almighty had excluded none from salvation by any positive absolute decree, and that grace was free to all. Though Arminius himself died in the year 1609, yet the tenets he taught had a very wide spread, and were adopted by great multitudes, as in their apprehension more honourable for the Deity, and more agreeable to the ideas of Divine justice and goodness, as well as to the scope of the gospel. But Francis Gomar, colleague of Arminius, and many learned Doctors in the Dutch universities, opposed these notions with the highest zeal. These matters soon became general and interesting, great numbers embarked on both sides, the flame of controversy spread all around, long and litigious debates ensued, and these were sometimes followed by civil commotions and popular tumults.

The celebrated Grotius, and several others of weight and influence, warmly recommended toleration and forbearance, as the Belgic Confession of Faith had determined nothing positively upon the points in debate. With a view to an accommodation, various conferences were held between the contending parties, one particularly at the Hague in the year 1611, another at Delft in 1613: And, in the year 1614, the States of Holland issued out

a pacific edict injoining mutual charity and friendship.

The Calvinists, however, became daily more apprehensive of the Arminians, nor could continue silent, when they imagined religion was in danger.

Neither did the Arminians conduct themselves with that prudence and circumspection that might invite to peace. They were even suspected of leaning to and inculcating the errors of Socinianism and Pelagianism; and in fact a toleration had been offered them in the year 1611, provided they would renounce such tenets *. Maurice Prince of Orange appeared openly against them, and some of the leading men who patronized them were severely punished. Oldenbarneveldt, venerable for wisdom and age, lost his life upon a scaffold; Grotius and Hoogerbeets were condemned to perpetual imprisonment. They had indeed opposed the Prince in some ambitious projects, which they thought inconsistent with the liberties of their country; but whether he took revenge from political or religious motives, or if he was influenced by both, is not so evident.

In this situation of affairs, the States-General, in conjunction with the Prince of Orange, judged it proper, that matters of a purely theological nature should be determined by an Ecclesiastical court. Accordingly, the famous Synod of Dort was assembled in May 1618, continued till the month of May the year following, and consisted of 154 sessions. This general Council was composed of Protestant Divines, not only from the United Provinces, but also from England, Scotland, the States of Brandenburg, Switzerland, Geneva, the Palatinate, Bremen and Embden.

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* Dr Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. Vol. V. p. 6. *Vide* Note added by his English Translator.

The most distinguished among the Arminians for learning and eloquence, made their appearance before this illustrious assembly. Simon Episcopius Professor of Divinity at Leyden, did in their name propose first of all to refute the opinions of the Calvinists, and then proceed to a more direct defence of their cause. This they thought extremely material, from which they could not depart. But this proposal was rejected by the Synod; and as the Arminians were charged with heresy, they were called upon to prove and defend their own opinions before they attacked those of others. Many arguments were used to persuade them to a compliance with this form of procedure, but without effect. Hereupon they were excluded from the assembly, and returned home, not without the loudest complaints of rigour and injustice, which they thought they had undeservedly met with.

Nevertheless, their doctrines were examined in their absence, and condemned as heretical. In consequence of this, they themselves were excommunicated, their ministers deposed, and their assemblies suppressed.

Among other things the Synod of Dort decided, in direct opposition to the Arminians, That predestination was to be considered as prior to any foresight of merit or demerit in the creature; that Jesus Christ had not by his death procured grace for all; that by the Fall, Man had lost the liberty of well-doing; that grace was efficacious of itself; and that such as are predestinated to eternal life cannot fall from the faith.

The Protestant Ministers in France, though they sent no deputies to this convocation, as the King had prohibited them, yet in a national Synod held at Alez in France in 1619, they approved their decisions.

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Notwithstanding this triumph obtained over the Arminians, yet were their opinions highly relished and well received in many places. They found an asylum in the Dutchy of Sleswick, under Frederic Duke of Holstein. Some of them took refuge in France and the Spanish Netherlands. Afterwards, under the mild shade of toleration, they erected churches in several places, they founded a college at Amsterdam, and they maintained their cause with such success, that they now have in the United Provinces 34 congregations, which are provided with 84 Ministers. Arminianism met with a kind reception in other countries, particularly in England, through the countenance of Archbishop *Laud*, and still keeps its ground, though it has been variously modelled, agreeable to the peculiar notions and views of its teachers. Indeed they admit Latitudinarian principles on many occasions, and would widen the bonds of communion to such a degree, as to receive Christians of every denomination, Papists excepted. They lay it down as a principle, That the doctrines necessary to be believed as essential to salvation are very few, and that every one ought to be left at liberty with respect to their private opinions, provided they conform their conduct to the laws of the gospel. }

Yet has the progress of Arminianism been considerably retarded in Germany and Switzerland, in consequence of the Leibnitian philosophy, which is there cultivated with much care. Leibnitz and Wolf attack some principles which are the foundation of the Arminian scheme, whilst they give a softening to, and gild with a pleasing lustre those that prove a support to the Calvinistical doctrine. They deny a liberty of indifference by which men may act or not, with, or without, or against motives. They assert a physical or mechanical necessity which regulates

gulates the material world according to certain fixed laws, and a spiritual and moral necessity by which rational and intelligent beings are actuated. They consider the universe as one grand system, created and governed in such a manner, so as to answer the original idea and design of Deity : That partial evil may issue in general good ; that the perfection of the *whole* does result from numberless inferior combinations and contrasts apparently irregular ; and that this will be the illustrious event and establishment of things, at the conclusion of the grand drama of nature, in the ultimate and glorious arrangement of the works of God.

With this view are all things wisely ordered and conducted. Predestination itself is a pre-determination to promote the important purposes of Providence. Perseverance is produced by a prepotency of motives ; the power of grace proves efficacious, by an irresistible energy of moral swasion ; and a series of moral effects arises in the intelligent world by moral means, with the same certainty, but without fatality, as natural effects are produced by a train of natural causes in the inanimate system. In some such manner do many German Divines argue, and thus endeavour by the aids of philosophy to illustrate the doctrine which they espouse, and to clear away the difficulties objected to it.

The multiplicity of sects and the subdivision of parties among the Protestants, was a matter of sincere regret to good and dispassionate men. Various and vigorous attempts were made to heal these breaches, to remove discord and animosity, and in a particular manner to accomplish an union between the Lutheran and the other Reformed Churches. Many eminent Divines and other persons of distinction on both sides, endeavoured with a laudable temper to effectuate so salutary and pacific a measure.

sure. They considered that great allowances were to be made for the force of education, the influence of human passions and prejudices, that mutual charity and forbearance were Christian duties, that the interest of their common cause would be much strengthened by a coalition, that the points in debate were not essential to true religion, and that the fundamental doctrines of the gospel were professed in both communions. In the year 1615, James I. King of Great Britain, made an effort to bring about this desirable end, but without success. In the Synod of Charenton, held in the year 1631, the Reformed Divines discovered a liberal and brotherly spirit, and declared to the world that the Lutheran system was not infected with fundamental errors, and was in the main conformable to the genius of Christianity. But the stiff and rigid Lutherans did not pay the same compliment to their dissenting brethren, and even reproached them with unbecoming vehemence. Soon after this, a friendly conference took place at Leipzig, where matters were conducted with more moderation, but without that fraternal confidence and affection, which alone could preface or secure a good understanding.

In the year 1661, another conference was held at Cassel, by appointment of William VI. Landgrave of Hesse. And although each of the contending parties shewed a great deal of candour, and a larger share of a tolerating and charitable spirit than formerly, yet could they not infuse these generous sentiments into the minds of others, and the Lutheran party in particular tenaciously adhered to their religious peculiarities.

John Dureus, a native of Scotland, a person highly esteemed on account of his profound learning and exalted piety, laboured with ardent and unwearied

unwearied zeal for the space of 40 years to remove differences, and to accomplish an agreement among the Protestant churches.

He wrote, exhorted and intreated; he underwent innumerable toils and sufferings; he travelled through most of the reformed countries, and warmly addressed Princes and Magistrates, to persuade them to promote so salutary a design. All admired his benevolence and activity, but few entered entirely into his views, or seconded his generous attempts; nay there were not wanting some of a narrow and suspicious turn, who endeavoured to misrepresent his intentions, as well as to defeat his schemes, which at last proved abortive.

I would now observe that the splendor and majesty of the Church of Rome were much obscured by the radiant light and glory of the Reformation. That remarkable Revolution which announced liberty, joy, and felicity to many nations, proved distressful and disastrous to the Roman Pontifs, and left them involved in ignominy and disappointment. In this declining state of affairs, they naturally looked round with a wishful eye, desirous of aid, and projected every measure that could be thought of, in order to repair the losses they had sustained, and to support their tottering throne. Nothing appeared more proper and promising than an attempt to enlarge the limits of their power and jurisdiction in foreign parts, and thus to obtain an equivalent for what may have been forfeited at home.

With this view the famous "Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith," was founded at Rome in the year 1622, by Gregory XV.

It consists of 13 Cardinals, two Priests, one Monk, and a Secretary, is enriched with ample revenues, dignified with very extensive powers and privileges, and has a magnificent palace appropriated

ated to it, in one of the most delicious spots at Rome *.

The grand design of this institution is, to propagate the Romish Faith in all the kingdoms and countries of the known world, to send missionaries abroad into every quarter of the globe from time to time to make profelytes; to publish the sacred writings and other pious performances in different languages, and to distribute them in distant places. By this Congregation great numbers of foreigners are educated and supported, who resort to Rome for religious instruction, and charitable foundations are established for the accommodation of such as have suffered banishment or other grievous misfortunes, on account of a zealous attachment to Papacy.

In the year 1627, Urban VIII. likewise founded another College for propagating the faith, which is placed under the direction of the former one. It is properly set apart as a seminary for the education of those who are destined for foreign missions, and where they are carefully instructed in all languages and sciences, till they are qualified for going abroad. This foundation was begun by John Baptist Viles, a Spanish nobleman, who bequeathed for this pious purpose all his opulent estate, and his splendid palace at Rome.

All this set an example, which was soon imitated in several Popish countries, particularly in France, where associations were formed and societies established upon a similar plan, for furnishing regular supplies of Ecclesiastics, who, upon a call from the congregation

* Besides this College "De Propaganda Fide," there are 14 other Congregations at Rome, erected for spiritual, and six for temporal affairs, who divide and share as it were the Papal power, and sometimes transact matters without the Pope's knowledge or consent. *Vide* Dr Mosheim's *Eccles. Hist.* in English, Vol. III. p. 420, &c.

congregation at Rome, should be ready to go and convert distant nations.

Thus multitudes of missionaries swarmed over the face of the earth, among whom the Jesuits, the Franciscans, Dominicans, Capuchins and Carmelites made the greatest figure. These spread the name of Christianity through the greatest part of Asia, during the course of this century, and converted some of the most barbarous nations to the profession, if not to the spirit of the Gospel. Their labours in India were incessant, and they were crowned with considerable success. Madura, and the extensive kingdoms of Siam, Tong-king, and Kochin-china received the light of the Gospel. Among other stratagems devised to gain upon the people of Madura, Robert de Nobili, an Italian Jesuit, assumed the appearance and character of a Brachman, who had come from some of the northern regions.* He besmeared his countenance, practised painful austerities, and imposed on the credulity of the simple inhabitants, who look on the order of Brachmans as descended from the gods. He converted to Christianity, twelve of the more distinguished Brachmans, who had a prodigious influence over the people.

Afterwards several other fictitious Brachmans were added, who boldly denied their being Europeans; and when upon some occasion Nobili was suspected, he forged a deed in the ancient Indian characters, to shew that the Brachmans of Rome were of a much older date than those of India, that they were descended from the God Brama, and that he himself derived his origin from this celestial stock. In the year 1663, four French Bishops were sent into India. These were succeeded by a solemn embassy from Lewis XIV. in the year

1684.

* Jouvenci Histoire des Jesuites.

1684, to the King of Siam, with a view to engage this Pagan Prince to abandon the idolatry of his ancestors, to embrace Christianity, and to permit the propagation of it in his dominions. Accordingly a church was erected at Siam by the King's express consent; a residence there was allowed to the missionaries, as also a seminary for instructing youth in the languages of the neighbouring nations. But these promising prospects were in a few years blasted by a revolution of affairs, when both the King and his prime minister were put to death,

Soon after the commencement of this century, the Romish religion made a very rapid progress in Japan. The missionaries sent thither, observing the neglect and cruelty which the Bonzas or Japanese Priests shewed towards persons in poverty and sickness, whom they ignorantly represented as objects of displeasure to the gods; endeavoured to render themselves extremely popular by all the gentle arts of humanity and beneficence. They likewise availed themselves of another circumstance which proved very advantageous to their cause. This was founded upon a kind of analogy or resemblance between the Romish religion and that of Japan, in a variety of things. They expected the favour of heaven through the mediation of certain deities who had voluntarily submitted to death. They implored the intercession and good offices of some departed spirits whom they dignified with special power and preferment *. In their superstitious worship they used tapers and perfumes, processions and statues, they prayed for the dead, and founded convents for both sexes, who devoted themselves to solitude, abstinence and celibacy. All this was no bad preparation for Popery, and the most san-

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* Modern Univers. Hist. vol. 9. p. 23, 24

guine hopes were conceived of its growth and continuance in this country. These, however, were soon dispersed. Intestine quarrels and violent contentions sprang up among those who ought to have been united in the firmest bonds both of religion and interest. The Augustinians, Dominicans and Franciscans, viewed the Jesuits with an eye of envy and jealousy. Mutual misunderstanding, discord and dissention prevailed among all these orders, which proved highly detrimental to the common cause : And in the year 1615, this received a mortal blow, which occasioned the total overthrow of Christianity in Japan. Then it was that a bloody edict was issued out by the Emperor against all the teachers and professors of the Gospel, which was executed with unimaginable barbarity, and raged for many years, till the name of Christian was extirpated in that mighty empire. Vast numbers of the Japanese Christians, as likewise many of the missionaries expired with amazing magnanimity and patience, amidst the most excruciating torments.

The particular causes of this cruel persecution are not so evidently known, though various conjectures have been formed. The Jesuits, Dominicans and Franciscans accuse each other, and sometimes the English and Dutch are blamed as having inspired the Emperor of Japan who was naturally jealous, with prejudices against the Roman Pontifs, that they might engross to themselves all the trade of that extensive kingdom. Most historians make mention of certain seditious letters intercepted by the Dutch, which alarmed the Emperor with an apprehension, that a design was formed by the Jesuits, of exciting a rebellion and reducing his kingdom under the government of Spain and Portugal.

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In China matters wore a more agreeable aspect. This immense and opulent region was a great object of Papal ambition, and in order to obtain so rich a prize, numerous tribes of missionaries were poured into it. The Jesuits in a more eminent degree boast of their signal and distinguishing exploits, and of the wonderful success which crowned their indefatigable labours. They, with singular attention, studied the character, the temper, taste and manners of the Chinese, and with an obsequiousness more artful than honest, endeavoured to adapt themselves accordingly upon all occasions. Even in matters of religion they made most dishonourable concessions, and by a strain of complaisance utterly unjustifiable, admitted among the doctrines and institutions of the Gospel, some of the profane notions and usages of Chinese idolatry. By their indulgence and dexterity, they rose in process of time to a summit of grandeur, and to a degree of confidence with the Emperors of that country, which was surprising to themselves, and astonishing to all around. They were advanced to the highest offices of state, employed in the most important negotiations, and carested as friends and favourites. Under their sway and management the Romish religion flourished in China, and what compleated their triumph was an edict which the Emperor issued in the year 1692. By this, all his subjects were permitted to embrace the Gospel, at same time it was therein declared that the Christian religion was nowise prejudicial to his government. And in the year 1700, a magnificent temple was erected for the Jesuits within the precincts of the imperial palace *.

It must be acknowledged, that the Jesuits were chiefly instrumental in spreading religion and obtaining

* Du Halde Description de la, Chine, Tom. III, p. 128, 129.

taining so much countenance and favour for it. But the measures they pursued appear evidently inconsistent with the honour and integrity of the sacred function, as also with the truth and dignity of the Gospel. Their conduct and dissingenuous behaviour gave great offence to many of their fellow missionaries, and even to the Roman Pontiffs themselves. The Dominicans and Franciscans arraigned them before the tribunal of his Holiness, in the year 1645; and this matter has been the subject of long and vehement dispute in the Church of Rome. The Jesuits in China are accused of tolerating an impure and impious mixture of Divine truth and Pagan error, and of blending Chinese superstition with the sacred religion of Jesus. They are represented as making little difference between the *Tien* and *Shang-Ti* of the Chinese, which in their language signify the heavens, and the true and living God; or between the theology of Confucius, and the Gospel of Christ. They allow the Chinese to retain many of their superstitious rites and ceremonies, and to pay public honours before the statue of Confucius in a temple dedicated to his memory. They pretend indeed that these are but political institutions and civil ceremonies, but they carry all the marks of religious homage and worship, and are in substance the same with what are observed towards their professed deities. They are such as these, libations of wine, and blood, an offering of fruits, fasting, kneeling, praying, and prostration of the body; the chief Mandarin performs the functions of the Priest, presides at the solemnity, and dismisses the people with a blessing.

The Jesuits are further accused as teaching a corrupt system of morality, as grasping at worldly honours, as carrying on a constant and extensive traffic like a body of merchants, as amassing wealth
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with the utmost avidity *, as deeply involved in civil affairs, and factious cabals, as exciting intestine commotions and civil wars wherever their projects of ambition are disconcerted, and as even refractory to the orders of the Roman Pontiffs, and to the Vicars and Legates commissioned by them. From these heavy charges the Jesuitical order with all their subtilty and chicane found it no easy matter to vindicate themselves; and though they frequently attempted it, and were not deficient in retorting upon their adversaries with virulence and vivacity, yet the impartial world could not be satisfied, considering the flagrant proofs of guilt produced against them †.

A vast multitude of Popish missionaries were likewise sent over to America. And there too the conduct of the Jesuits was of a similar nature with what has been just now described. Some of the Roman Catholic clergy are said to surpass the idolatrous natives both in the licentiousness of their manners and in the superstitious rites which they profanely perform. But the Jesuitical order takes the lead, solicitous as it would seem, not so much to make converts to true Christianity, as to usurp dominion, acquire wealth, and indulge to pleasure. In order to civilize the wild and vagrant Indians, they have in several provinces, both in North and South America, founded cities, enacted laws, and established some such sort of government as prevails

* The Jesuit missionaries abroad, do often vie with grantees of the first quality, in luxury of living, magnificence and equipage, and yet become rich enough to return home and purchase bishopricks.

† My plan obliges me very much to abridge this curious controversy about the worship of the Chinese, and the behaviour of the Jesuits. Besides other books, I refer the reader to Dr Mosheim's *Eccles. Hist. Eng.* by Dr Maclain, vol. IV. p. 220. to 227.

vails in European states. They themselves preside in the administration, and sustain the twofold character of priests and magistrates. This gives them a manifest superiority and a kind of irresistible influence, which they carefully improve to their own great emolument. Their sway is most unlimited in the internal and less accessible provinces of America, from whence it is reported, that they annually remit to Europe astonishing quantities of gold, but chiefly from Paraguay, of which they appeared to assume an exclusive possession *.

Here it was that the disciples of Loyola erected for themselves an independant republic, under the mask of Religion. But this was little regarded; hypocrites instead of converts were multiplied, and this oftentimes through fear or force. Baptism was all of Christianity which most of the Indians could pretend to, whilst their attention was called off to matters of a different nature. They were instructed in the art of war, inured to arms, and taught to consider the Jesuits as their sovereigns, nay, as certain deities, also to look on all other white people as demoniacs and implacable enemies. One fundamental law of this establishment was, to admit neither a Spaniard or Portuguese, no bishop or governor within this new dominion, so that all the projects and exploits of the Jesuits might continue an impenetrable secret. Many accusations were sent home against them, which, at last, awakened the Courts of Madrid and Lisbon. So late as in the year 1752, when the united forces of Spain and Portugal marched towards that country, in order to make an exchange of some lands, agreeable to a treaty entered into for ascertaining the

* La Plata or Paraguay, is a vast region in South America, 1500 miles in length and 1000 miles in breadth, and is one of the most fruitful countries in the world.

the limits of their respective territories in South America, the Jesuits animated the Indians and kindled a war, which fully opened the eyes of the world; and these rebellious proceedings contributed, with other causes, to precipitate their downfall and suppression, as formerly noticed.

The northern parts of Africa that lye toward the Mediterranean sea, were once adorned with many flourishing Christian churches. Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, Augustine, Fulgentius, and other Fathers of the primitive Church lived in these bounds. There, many famous Councils were assembled to regulate the affairs of the Christian Church. But now—all these places once shining and glorious, are sadly over-run with Mahometanism.

The interior parts of that great peninsula are still involved in the darkness of Paganism. Some of the maritime provinces have been brought over by the church of Rome to the profession of Christianity, though in a very imperfect degree.

The Capuchins were principally employed in the African missions, in discharging of which they underwent incredible hazards and hardships. Their endeavours were attended with some success; the Kings of Benin and Awerri embraced the Gospel, as did also that heroic Princess, Anna Zingha, Queen of Metamba, and all her subjects, in the year 1652.

There are, however, few Christian churches to be found in Africa, except in the country of Abyssinia, called the empire of Prester-John, containing the great and higher Ethiopia, which extends 1500 miles in length, and to about the half of this in breadth.

A tradition prevails among the inhabitants, that the Queen of Sheba, who went to visit King Solomon,

mon, was Empress in this country. Many attribute their first conversion to Christianity, to the Ethiopian eunuch, prime minister of their Queen Candace, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles *.

Ruffinus relates, that Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria sent Frumentius thither, though called by the general name of Indja, which was usual among the Romans. There, in the fourth century, he, by his unwearied labours, converted an incredible number of people to the Christian Faith.

Ruffinus says, he had this account from Edeusius a presbyter at Tyre, the companion of Frumentius.

The Abyssinians are extremely rigid in their fasts, and such among them as betake themselves to a Monastic life, assemble at stated hours and frequently at midnight for the purposes of devotion. Their monastries are more like villages than convents, every Monk having a distinct dwelling-house, and as much adjacent land assigned to him, as a man is able to cultivate. The most famous of the Ethiopian monastries is that of Allelujah, where formerly there are said to have been 40,000 Monks, who possessed the whole circumjacent country as necessary for maintenance. They have few books among them but the Bible, the Canons of the First Councils, and Lives of their Saints.

They hold the Scriptures to be the perfect rule of Christian faith. They use circumcision as well as baptism, and perform divine offices in their vulgar tongue with extraordinary devotion. They always take off their shoes when they enter into church, and never sit down in it unless upon the ground. They express a deep sense of religion upon many occasions, and are very ready to visit the sick and diseased. They allow the Bishop
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* The Acts of the Apostles ch. viii. ver. 27 to 40.

of Rome to be the First Patriarch, but condemn his pretended supremacy over the whole church as Antichristian. The Roman Pontifs made various attempts to subject the Abyssinians to their ghostly dominion, but all in vain.

In the year 1554, Ignatius Loyola, founder of the order of Jesuits, begged of the Pope permission to go in person to Ethiopia for that end. This being declined for several reasons, a very splendid mission of Friars of his order was sent thither. The missionaries were admitted to an audience of the Emperor Claudius with abundance of ceremony, but he and his people continued stedfast in their former faith, and differing but little from the Copts in Egypt, acknowledge the Patriarch of Alexandria as their spiritual chief.

About the commencement of the 17th century, a fresh effort was made by the Portuguese Jesuits in that part of the world. They at last, by their artifice and eloquence, prevailed on the Emperor Sel-tam Segued to embrace the Catholic faith, in the year 1626.

He, with a view to ingratiate himself with Portugal, promoted Alphonso Mendez, a missionary of that nation, to the highest rank, and constituted him head of the Abyssinian church. But this imprudent patriarch, elated with pride, and hurried on by intemperate zeal, did, by his cruelty and despotism defeat his own end, and soon subverted the Roman interest in that country. He employed the tortures of the Inquisition to convert the Abyssinians, who were most zealously attached to their ancient religion, and as if that had been heathenism itself, he re-baptized those who were gained over to the Catholic faith. He, by his intrigues and cabals, excited tumults and conspiracies in the state, and in a most insolent manner encroached upon the

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prerogatives of the Prince. This exposed him and his cause to universal odium, and at length a solemn declaration was issued from the throne, abrogating all former edicts in favour of the Popish religion. When Basilides, son of Segued, succeeded as Emperor, he, in the year 1634, banished Mendez and all the Jesuits from the Ethiopian territories. From that period to the present one, the name of Rome is hateful to the Abyssinians; they guard their frontiers to prevent the admission of any Catholic missionaries, * and detest Popery to such a degree, that, of the two, they would rather turn Mahometans than Papists.

The zeal which Catholic countries displayed in propagating Christianity, excited a pious emulation in Protestant states to imitate so laudable an example, and in a much better cause. The Lutherans projected various schemes of this nature with an honest intention, but found the execution of them incumbered with insuperable difficulties, especially as very few of the Princes of that persuasion had either territories or colonies beyond the limits of Europe. This was not the case with respect to other reformed kingdoms, particularly the English and Dutch, whose settlements are so extensive in America, Asia, and Africa. It must be acknowledged that the grand objects in view are the enlargement of trade and commerce, the acquisition of foreign countries, the increase of wealth, power and importance; yet ought not Religion by any means to be neglected. Neither, in fact, has it been

* La Croze, *Histoire du Christianisme de l'Ethiopie* p. 79, 80.

I must remark that the Abyssinians made a very late discovery of their irreconcilable aversion to the Church of Rome, upon a recent attempt made upon them by the Pope, which met with a very severe reception, as appears by public letters from Madrid, dated June 30th 1720.

been disregarded. Considerable attention has been paid in Protestant states to the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, respectable societies have been formed for this express purpose, many missionaries have been employed and supported by them, the Holy Scriptures have been translated into different languages, published and distributed by them, their labours have been crowned with considerable success, frequent and numerous emigrations of well-instructed people have contributed to second their religious endeavours ; and in many countries, particularly in America, are reformed churches established, which enjoy the light of the Gospel in purity, and some of our Colonies are comfortably supplied with Protestant ministers. It is indeed no easy matter to polish and instruct the savage and roving Indians, yet, in the year 1633, Elliot, who has been denominated by some the apostle of the Indians, as he learned their language and translated into it the Holy Bible ; Shepard, Mayhew, and others, exerted themselves with an ardent zeal, at once to civilize and convert those fierce and unruly nations. The attention of the public was soon drawn to these important objects ; and, in the year 1647, the English Parliament committed the care of them to a society consisting of persons eminent for their rank and influence. The execution of their religious projects was suspended amidst the heat and hurry of intestine commotion. But when the civil wars were ended, the society was established upon a firmer footing under Charles II. in the year 1661. King William III. conferred upon it many marks of royal favour, and succeeding Princes as well as multitudes of private individuals, have enriched it with additional donations and legacies.

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The united provinces have not been deficient in the duty of enlightening the Pagan nations with the Gospel, where they have acquired settlements, particularly in the East Indies, in the islands of Amboyna, Java, Ceylon, and Formosa, and upon the coasts of Malabar. This last named place is a large populous country, upon the western coast of the peninsula of India, on this side the *Ganges*. The south end is inhabited by those who call themselves the Christians of St Thomas, because they were converted by the apostle of that name. They remained for 1300 years under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Babylon, who sometimes sent them an archbishop to regulate more effectually their ecclesiastical affairs. The first news of them which came to Europe was in the year 1501, when some of the Christian natives arrived at Portugal. They hate and despise the doctrines of Popery, and disavow all subjection to the See of Rome, notwithstanding frequent attempts to procure their submission and obedience. Even so lately as in the year 1717, there was an epistle in Syriac printed at Leyden, which came from the Bishop of the ancient Syrian Christians in Malabar, whom they call Maha-Thome, or Great Thomas. The professor of oriental languages in Leyden returned him a letter, at same time sent, as a present, his Syriac New Testament, so that a fresh correspondence was then opened *.

I might here observe, that in Scotland a society was constituted for propagating Christian knowledge, by letters patent from Queen Anne, in May 1709. A second patent was obtained from King George II. in June 1738, not only ratifying the original

* The number of Christians in Malabar was computed to be 100,000, in the year 1720. — Millar's Prop. of Christ, vol. II. p. 479.

original deed, but considerably enlarging the powers and privileges of the society. And although their endeavours have been principally employed in re-forming the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, where ignorance, superstition and Popery prevailed, yet they have not altogether restricted themselves within these bounds, but extended their pious cares abroad, particularly in America, for the conversion of the Indian tribes.

Frederick IV. King of Denmark, did, in the year 1705, likewise set on foot the design of propagating the Gospel in foreign parts. It was immediately carried into execution, and missionaries were sent to Tranquebar situated on the coast of Coromandel.

They have been very zealous, active, and successful, in spreading the light of Christianity in the East-Indies. In the years 1717 and 1718, the Royal Danish Missionaries wrote two letters to his Britannick Majesty, George I. giving an account of the measures they pursued, and of the progress they made; and the King was pleased to return them a most gracious answer, inviting them to a further correspondence, encouraging them in the good work they had undertaken, and declaring his readiness to assist them in it *.

We have already seen the great pains taken by the Church of Rome to compensate for the loss she sustained upon the Reformation, by seeking to spread her doctrine, and enlarge her dominion, in Asia, Africa, and America. Yet neither was she idle in Europe, the other quarter of the globe. Many various schemes were projected, innumerable arts and stratagems tried, all the resources of genius exhausted, and the force of arms employed to

* Millar's Propagation of Christianity, vol. II. p. 498.
 &c. &c.

to oppress the Protestants, to ravish from them the advantages they had gained, and to recover out of their hands the valuable provinces and kingdoms which had renounced the Romish religion. At last they kindled the flames of a religious war; the plan of a formidable attack upon all the friends of the Reformation was concerted; and the persecuting, bigotted house of Austria was pitched on to carry it into execution. The religious liberties and civil rights of the Austrians and Bohemians, secured to them by the most solemn treaties, were violated in the grossest manner. The first indeed found themselves unable to resist the shock and to maintain their privileges. But the Bohemian Protestants assuming greater courage, armed for their religion and liberty, took terrible revenge upon their adversaries; and upon the death of the Emperor Mathias, did elect for King of Bohemia Frederick V. Elector Palatine, a Prince of the reformed Religion, and with great solemnity crowned him at Prague, in the year 1619.

This bold measure, from which the greatest advantages were expected, proved a source of complicated miseries. Frederick was defeated by the imperial army, in the year 1620, and deprived at once of his new dignity, and of his hereditary dominions. The Austrian and Bavarian armies ravaged in a merciless manner his fine and extensive territories; the Bohemians, who had embarked in the cause from zeal to the reformed Religion, were debarred the exercise of it, and obliged to submit to the tyranny of Rome: And many of them were put to death, whilst others had their estates confiscated, or were condemned to perpetual banishment.

Hereupon, a long and bloody war was produced, in which most of the Princes of Europe were unfortunately engaged. The King of Denmark entered

tered into a confederacy with several of the German States, in order to assert the rights of the Elector Palatine against the severe and arbitrary measures of the Emperor. The allies, however, were unsuccessful: Victory accompanied the imperial arms, and the votaries of Rome were flushed with the most sanguine hopes, that this would prove the beginning of an universal triumph over the Protestants. The Emperor himself, elated with conquest, prompted by ambition and bigotry, appeared to threaten both the civil and sacred rights of the Germanic empire. He made a military progress through a great part of Germany, and harassed the States and Princes who would not submit to the Romish yoke. John George I. Elector of Saxony though a Lutheran Prince, yet actuated by violent prejudices against those of the Calvinistical or reformed persuasion, from a zealous attachment to the Emperor, and other political motives, concurred in these despotic measures, and afforded powerful aid. To crown all, Ferdinand II. did, in the year 1629, issue out the Restitution edict, obliging the Protestants to restore to Rome all the revenues and possessions ceded to them in the preceding century, in virtue of the *religious peace* then concluded.

It would be difficult to describe the alarm or terrible consequences of this imperial mandate, the dissensions and tumults which it occasioned, the bold claims that were started by the Roman Catholic priests and monks, the rapacity, force and fraud employed by them, or the numberless disasters and calamities in which the Protestants were involved.

In this critical and dismal situation of affairs, Gustavus Adolphus King of Sweden, that glorious and immortal hero, appeared on the field, and undertook

undertook a defence of the Germanic liberties, against the despotism and cruelty of the house of Austria. With no very numerous army he departed for Germany in the year 1632, and by a surprizing series of victories, he blasted the towering hopes which the Pope and Emperor entertained of extinguishing the Protestant Religion, at least within the bounds of the empire. This illustrious Prince fell in the battle of Lutzen, in the year 1632; but still the war was carried on with great ardour for many years, by the gallant commanders of the Swedish army, under Christina daughter and successor of Gustavus.

{ At last, after a war of thirty years continuance, attended with great effusion of blood and expence of treasure, the famous treaty of peace was concluded in Westphalia, in the year 1648. By it the Protestants derived many important advantages and privileges, which the Court of Rome beheld with envy, and with all the pangs of disappointed ambition. The Emperor indeed refused to restore the *Upper* Palatinate, or to re-instate the Bohemians and Austrians in the enjoyment of their former religious liberties. But the peace of Augsbourg was ratified, which the Protestants had obtained from Charles V. the Restitution-edict was abrogated, and both the contending parties were confirmed in a perpetual possession of what they had held in the year 1624.

The Roman Pontifs did not lose sight of the Greek church, but were earnestly solicitous to recover their interest at Constantinople, and to subject to the Papal hierarchy the empire of Russia, the great bulwark of the Grecian faith, though all their attempts proved abortive. That body of Christians who live in religious communion with the Patriarch of Constantinople, is denominated the

the Greek or eastern Church, one part of which acknowledges his supreme jurisdiction, whilst another is governed by peculiar institutions and spiritual rulers of their own. Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, are each of them dignified with a Patriarch, but acknowledge themselves subordinate to the See of Constantinople. The ecclesiastical dominion of the Byzantian Patriarch is very extensive, and comprehends a great part of Greece, the Grecian islands, Moldavia, Wallachia, also several European and Asiatic provinces that are subject to the Ottoman Porte. The Alexandrian Primate resides at Cairo, and exercises his spiritual power in Egypt, Libya, Nubia, and Arabia. The Patriarch of Antioch lives at Damascus, and has Syria, Cilicia, and Mesopotamia subject to him; whilst the Patriarch of Jerusalem extends his authority over Palestine, part of Arabia, and the country beyond Jordan.

Although the Patriarch of Constantinople is elected by twelve Bishops who reside nearest that famous city, yet he must be confirmed by the Turkish Emperor.

By his permission he not only exercises spiritual authority, but likewise takes cognizance of civil matters among the members of his church, and has a supreme power of excommunication vested in him, which appears to all of that communion a most tremendous evil.

The Greeks acknowledge the Holy Scriptures and the decrees of the first seven œcumenical Councils as the rule of Faith, the explication of which is entirely left to the Patriarch and his brethren.

Deplorable ignorance, licentiousness and impiety have too general a reign among the Greeks, whilst they groan under the Turkish yoke. They are split into many sects and parties, and their religion

is encumbered with a groupe of frivolous and superstitious ceremonies. Yet they retain an invincible aversion to the Latin church, and have resisted all the arts and efforts employed by the Roman Pontifs to gain upon them. These have indeed founded a few churches in some of the islands of the Archipelago; but they are small and inconsiderable; nor will either the Greeks or Turks permit the Romish missionaries to enlarge their influence and dominion any further.

A new method of attack was devised by the Church of Rome more insidious than honest, which was to persuade the Greeks that they had always been good Catholics, and that the difference betwixt them only related to certain modes of expression, and some ceremonies which did not affect the essence of Religion. These artful insinuations were, however, suspected and exposed by many, who bore an irreconcilable hatred to the See of Rome. None appeared in this opposition with more firmness, fortitude and zeal, than Cyrillus Lucar, Patriarch of Constantinople. He was a Prelate of extensive learning, had made the grand tour of Europe, was well acquainted with the world and mankind, and no stranger to the doctrine and discipline both of the Romish and Reformed churches. In order to destroy at once all the designs and hopes formed by the votaries of Rome, with respect to a junction between the eastern and western churches, he openly declared a strong predilection in favour of the Protestant Religion as established in England and Holland, and avowed an intention to reform the doctrine and discipline of the Greeks, and to make them approach nearer to the genuine purity of the Gospel. This caused a great alarm among the partizans of Popery, and created numerous and violent enemies
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to the venerable Patriarch. The Jesuits, in particular, conceived black and bloody designs against him, they seduced some perfidious Greeks into a treacherous conspiracy, drew in the French ambassador into their intrigues, and with scandalous malignity suborned false witnesses to accuse him of treason. In consequence of this, he was cruelly put to death, by order of the Turkish Emperor, in the year 1638. He was succeeded in the See of Constantinople by the Bishop of Berea, who had been an infamous instrument in promoting the ruin of his predecessor. During his short pontificate there was some probability of effectuating the long wished for union, as he publicly declared his attachment to Rome. But he was soon cut off by a violent death; and Parthenius, who was next advanced to the patriarchal dignity, opposed with distinguished zeal the doctrines and pretensions of the church of Rome, and that with such success as to prevent any future efforts.

All expectations from Russia are likewise defeated, nor have the most political Pontifs, and the utmost address of the Court of Rome, been able to make any deep or dangerous impression there. When *Peter* the Great ascended the Russian throne, that magnanimous and creative Prince, did not only give a new face to the civil government and policy of that country, but, in a great measure, new-modelled its ecclesiastical state. He indeed made no change in the articles of faith, which were agreeable to the doctrine of the Grecian Church. But he was at great pains to get them explained conformably to the genius and scope of the Gospel, and to the principles of unprejudiced reason. He laboured incessantly to instruct and reform both clergy and laity, and to dispell the clouds of superstition that sat brooding over the nation. He himself

self became the liberal patron of the arts and sciences, founded many seminaries of learning, roused his subjects from a state of ignorance and lethargy, and made them emerge from their former barbarism into the light of knowledge and improvement. Whilst he put Roman Catholics under proper restrictions, he granted liberty of conscience to other Christians, banished that demon of persecution, and abolished all penal laws on a religious account. With a view to place these important matters more directly under his own eye and cognizance, and to check the splendid progress of patriarchal power in his dominions, which seemed to shade the lustre of imperial prerogative, he declared himself the head and supreme protector of the Russian Church.

After the peace of Westphalia was concluded, of which we made mention some time ago, the Court of Rome was laid under considerable restraints. But if it did not wage war in the most open and public manner against the Protestants, yet whenever they had power and opportunity, they persecuted and oppressed them with unwearied cruelty. Thus in Hungary, both Lutherans and Calvinists were harrassed by the Roman Pontifs for the space of ten years. In Poland, such who opposed Papal pretensions, were exposed to continual trouble and vexation during the course of this century, deprived of their churches, and plundered of their possessions, in violation of solemn treaties and conventions. The remains of the Waldenses who dwelt in the vallies of Piedmont, were hunted down and treated with the utmost inhumanity, especially in the years 1633, 1655, 1685, and 1696. In Germany, many flagrant acts of injustice were committed by the partizans of Popery, in manifest contempt of the peace agreed upon. And all these
infractions

infractions of the treaty of Westphalia, flowed from a spirit of bigotry and zeal for the superstition of Rome, and were intended to obscure, if they could not extinguish, the light of the Reformation.

This persecuting principle raged with a singular degree of ferocity in France, and exhibited to view many dismal and calamitous scenes. After the accession of Henry IV. to the throne of that kingdom, the Protestants there, commonly called Hugonots, were incorporated into a body-politic, were secured in the enjoyment of their civil and religious rights by solemn edict, and had very important privileges conferred upon them. They were even put in possession of some well fortified cities, particularly Rochelle, a place of great strength, and allowed to keep soldiers and garrisons of their own. From this extraordinary circumstance alone might be learned the great number, power, and weight of the Protestants in France, who could obtain such uncommon advantages, such as almost appear inconsistent with regular subordination and government, and to be like — *Imperium in Imperio* — one powerful and independent society within the bosom of another. Accordingly upon some occasions they acted with freedom and boldness. This, impartial history must candidly acknowledge. Whether from motives of policy or faction, security or religion, an ardent zeal for their own which they knew to be true, or an abhorrence of Popery which they looked on as false and superstitious; so it was, that they transacted most momentous matters without the knowledge or consent of their Sovereign, and courted the alliance of England and Holland, as a separate state. Hence arose civil broils and animosities in the year 1621, which continued for a long time between the French King Lewis XIII. and his Protestant subjects. Richlieu
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his prime minister endeavoured to persuade him, that sound policy and the public tranquillity required a suppression of those high privileges in which the Protestants were invested, and that they should be deprived of all their strong-holds, their guards and garrisons. A despotic Prince listened with eagerness to such sort of counsel, and followed out the plan proposed by his favourite. In the year 1628, the city of Rochelle was besieged, and after a long and gallant defence, it was taken by the French Monarch and annexed for ever to the crown. When this principal bulwark of the Protestants in France was removed, other places belonging to them fell an easy sacrifice, their spirit and interest declined apace, and they were reduced to an absolute dependence upon the pleasure of the Prince. But he not satisfied with the victory obtained, and indisposed to shew kindness or generosity, perfidiously invaded those religious liberties which had been granted to the Protestants by most express law, and that with the same disregard to paction and treaty as he had exhibited, in attacking and destroying those civil rights and possessions, which had been assigned them for the security of the other. Nay, when flattery and promises could not prevail on the Protestants, to renounce that reformed religion for which they had contended so gloriously and shed so much blood, every species of violence and barbarity was employed against them. The most unjust laws, the most tyrannical edicts were published, and all the oppressive methods which a persecuting spirit and bigotry could invent, were taken, to shake their constancy, and to subject them to the galling yoke of Rome. In the reign of Lewis XIV. these harsh and arbitrary measures were still pursued. Instigated by the counsels and importunity of French Bishops and Jesuits, who
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with intemperate zeal fought the utter ruin of the Reformation in France, he, in the year 1685, revoked the edict of Nantes, in open defiance of law and justice. Even many Roman Catholics could not but condemn this revocation, and, actuated by natural sentiments of humanity and equity, considered it as a gross violation of public faith, and as most injurious to the whole body of Protestants. They were now robbed of their birth-right, and deprived of the invaluable privilege of worshipping God according to their conscience, which had been guaranteed to them in the most solemn manner, by the law of the land. Nay, to crown this scene of iniquity, a further order was issued, requiring all the members of the reformed Church to renounce the Protestant profession, and to embrace the Popish religion.

In consequence of this, the public exercise of the reformed Religion which, for about a century past, had been enjoyed under the sanction of law, was entirely abolished in France, the Protestant ministers were silenced, their churches were pulled down, and their congregations dispersed or discharged under the severest penalties to assemble any more. It is not easy to conceive the consternation and calamity occasioned by such tyrannical edicts, amongst the numerous and respectable members of the reformed Church. Many fled from the impending storm, abandoned their friends, their families, and native country, and found refuge in foreign kingdoms. Others who staid or were confined at home, felt the unrelenting hand of persecution, were exposed to the rage of brutal soldiers, and to all the hardships and oppressions of a depressed and despised party. Such the genius and magic of Popery, which can blind and bewitch mankind to such a degree, as to make them not only to deny their senses

senses and reason, but also to counteract their interest, if thereby Romish superstition and dominion may be promoted ! For all generally acknowledge, that besides the injustice of these proceedings, they were in fact highly prejudicial to the welfare of France. That kingdom lost a vast number of its valuable subjects, a multitude of which constitutes the strength of a state : They emigrated into other countries, and carried their wealth, their ingenuity, their arts and manufactures along with them to enrich strangers, who, with wisdom as well as humanity, opened their arms, and afforded that protection which the mother-country had un-naturally refused.

The other churches of the Reformation enjoyed a larger share of serenity and repose, stood on a more firm and solid basis, arrived gradually to greater stability, and by the favour and blessing of Divine Providence continue to this day.

In virtue of the glorious Reformation, that grand and memorable Revolution, the face of affairs was wonderfully changed, and philosophy, learning, and religion, reared up their venerable heads in triumph and security, and produced the most beneficial effects. The arts and sciences formerly uncultivated or misunderstood, are now properly improved and carried to a sublime pitch of refinement. The immortal Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, unsealed the springs and opened up the channels of science. Galilei appeared in Italy, Descartes and Gassendi in France, the celebrated Grotius in Holland, Tycho Brahe in Denmark ; whilst Boyle and Newton adorned England, and in Germany shone Kepler, Hevelius, and Leibnitz, as did the two Bernoulli in Switzerland. Those bright, original luminaries led the way, excited a love of letters, a spirit of refined emulation in Europe, and were followed

